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LAYS

OF THE

SEA-SIDE.

A RHYTHMICAL RENDERING OF SEASIDE STORIES AND INCIDENTS.

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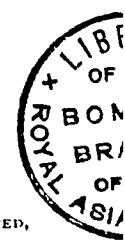
BY

ALIPH CHEEM.

AUTHOR OF THE

"LAYS OF IND,"

"BASIL ORMOND," AND "CHRISTABEL'S LOVE."



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THE COCKNEY'S PARADISE:

(A LAY OF MARGATE).

Let us up and take a ramble,
Or, more properly, a scramble,
  Through the crowds at Cockney Margate
    In the eighth month of the year.
'Tis the climax of the season,
And you'll find, I say with reason,
  There are funny things to look at there,
    And funny things to hear.

Though the language mayn't be Attic,
Nor the folk aristocratic,
Though the dresses aren't exactly
Such as Hurlingham displays;
If you're not a stuck-up party,
And can love what's bright and hearty,
With a sniff of brine, at Margate
You may spend some cheery days.

Are you worn with being busy?
With the city turmoil dizzy?
Are you yearning for a pick-me-up
For jaded flesh and bone?
Then throw engagements over,
Take a London, Chat., and Dover,
And, in Margate's bracing breezes,
Feast your lungs upon ozone.

Well, you're at your destination!
Just outside the railway station,
Plump, you find yourself at once
Upon the promenade and beach.

Laughing masses, happy lasses,
Not to speak of men—and asses—
Pass before you in a motley throng,
As far as eye can reach.

Bay with gentle curve extending,
Cliffs that seem like never ending,
Pier and jetty black with people,
Harbour bright with flag and sail;
Right and left long piles of houses,
Full of week-abandoned spouses
Looking forward to the husbands' boat
And Sunday's cake and ale.

But our goal is "the Extension,"
Which, perhaps, I ought to mention,
Is the ending to the Jetty,
Where you sit and eat the air.
You will see there half the City
And you'll think, "Oh, what a pity
Men so commonplace should be the lords
Of womankind so fair."

Band (Militia) playing brassey,
'Arry ogling, proud, eye-glassey,
Clad in flannels and a boating hat,
As if he owned a yacht.
While the week-abandoned spouses
From the neat bow-windowed houses
Smile at 'Arry. Oh, you women,
You're a very funny lot!

There's poor John in London toiling,
In his City office broiling,
That Lucretia may at Margate spend
The proceeds of his work.
While he slaves, confiding gaby,
Thinking but of her and baby,
She is flirting. Is she hurting?
That's a question I must shirk.

And, when John returns for Sunday,
Rushing up again on Monday,
She receives him, oh, so nicely,
With such welcome on her lips,

He's repaid for toil and trouble,
He would do it even double ;
Oh you darlings, truce to snarlings,
We'll forgive your little slips.

Then we view the mermaid virgin,
Female form in fishy mergin',
And we beg of her in vain to wag
Her artificial tail ;
And the flea so educated,
With its silver collar weighted,
And the yawls below the staircase
At a shilling for the sail.

Next we watch the husbands' packet,
Landing men 'mid joke and racket,
And embracings,—or grimacings—
As the special case may need ;
And we turn to landward laughing,
And we do a little chaffing
With the ladies, who've no husbands
Just at present, "no, indeed."

Next, the Camera Obscura
We inspect, and never surer
  Dodge of spying what they're after,
    Wife or mistress on the pier.
It will fix you what they're doing,
Man or woman interviewing,
  You can almost hear the words the other
    Whispers in her ear.

After dinner, there's the dancing,
Or, I ought to say, the prancing
  At the New Assembly Rooms, or else
    The "Hall upon the Sea,"
Though we'll draw a little curtain
Over some of this, I'm certain
  You had no idea that 'Arry
    Such a gentleman could be.

Lord! his waltzing is quite stately,
And he dances so sedately,
  You'd imagine the descriptions
    You have heard of it are jokes.

The only time he goes it,
And most violently toes it,
  Is when, flying through the polka,
    He reminds you of the Vokes'.

You're a decent fellow, 'Arry,
Though your H's do miscarry,
  You'd be nicer if you didn't ape
    The yachtsman or the duke.
You have many a sterling virtue,
Give up swagger, it won't hurt you,
  And you'll be a better Englishman,
    Deserving no rebuke.

Ere we quit this scene so festive,
Of so many thoughts suggestive,
  We must pay a humble tribute
    To one feature of the place: —
The hordes of healthy children!
'Tis a spectacle bewildrin',
  And to Britons most convincing
    Of the vigour of the race.

Burns was great upon his Deeside,
But give me our Kentish seaside,
Margate, Ramsgate, Westgate, Folkestone,
Herne Bay, Dover, Deal and Hythe!
Go and breathe the Kent ozone, sir,
You will gain at least a stone, sir,
And give unexpected trouble
To old Tempus and his scythe!

THE DETRIMENTAL:

(A LAY OF FOLKESTONE).

Augustus Cheek was a handsome youth ;
Brown eyes and chestnut curls.
Though penniless quite, he was loved in truth
By all of the Folkestone girls.

He appeared in life to have no aim
But to dress and smoke cigars,
To inspire some utterly futile flame
And aggravate mammas.

The Folkestone matrons regarded him
In the light of a social thorn.
The fathers passed him with greeting grim,
And wished that he wasn't born.

He had sisters, seven, all maids the dears,
Five brothers, burly and tall.
He had tried his hand at many careers,
But had come to grief in all.

So, at last, his father remarked to 'Gus:—
"It is time these failures ceased.
You had better come home and live with us,
There's board and lodging at least."

So 'Gus came back to the natal nest,
And his bearing shewed no shame,
He danced and flirted, and did his best
At the detrimental game.

He'd a cheery voice and a pleasant way;
It was charming to hear him laugh;
He'd a fund of delightful things to say,
And a plentiful stock of chaff.

So, despite that his penniless state was known
To every soul in the place,
There wasn't a maiden who wouldn't own
That she loved his handsome face.

Now in Folkestone was settled a General Power,
With a wife, and a niece so sweet,
The whole of the county of Kent you'd scour,
But you wouldn't a daintier meet.

And, what didn't the least from her charms detract,
—So unromantic we've grown—
Was the thoroughly well established fact,
She'd a thousand a year of her own.

Miss Amy Power was the General's ward,
And he warded her pretty smart.
He swore that he'd run his trusty sword
Through a detrimental's heart.

Of the gay Augustus, in language terse,
He had often been heard to speak.
If *he* should approach, it would be the worse
For Mr. Augustus Cheek.

" I'd like to catch him," the General cried
One day to his quaking spouse.
" There'd only be murder, my dear, if he tried
To get inside this house.

" So, don't make any mistake at all,
Or say that my order's vague ;
At tennis party, or tea, or ball,
Shun *him*, as you'd shun the plague."

They shunned poor 'Gus, as you'd shun the pest,
But the pest will come, no doubt,
Though science may do its very best
To keep the intruder out.

It came at a picnic by the sea;
Away from her aunt she'd strayed;
Sweet Amy was ami-able, and he
Most excellent running made.

In fact, ere later her aunt she joined
With innocent, artless air,
The rascal had—well, we will say,—purloined
A lock of her golden hair.

She had fallen a swift and easy prey
To the detrimental's wiles;
She had given her little heart away
For a few delicious smiles.

From uncle and aunt she would keep it dark,
As she'd keep an awful crime,
And she made to herself the trite remark,
"It will all come right in time."

From uncle and aunt it dark was kept,
Of suspicion they hadn't a ghost
When she went to bed, and they thought she slept,
She was writing to 'Gus by post.

And his billets doux were daily received,
And safe on her pillow laid,
By—goodness gracious, who would have believed
Such a thing of a chambermaid?

Thus carried along was the pretty game,
For the space of a month or more,
Till an unexpected obstruction came
In the shape of an illness sore.

* * * *
* * * *

Miss Amy was quite an exceptional Miss,
The measles she'd never had.
Said the doctor, "An awkward affair is this,
By Jove, she has got 'em bad."

Miss Amy, in fact, was extremely ill
With the infantine disease.
But, fortunately, it failed to kill,
And she lived to sniff the breeze.

They said in a week she could eat the air,
On the Lees, or the beach below,
For an hour or so, in a nice bath chair,
And she let her Gussy know.

So every morning and afternoon
She would take her ride, for an hour,
And 'Gus for a moment enjoyed the boon
Of a smile from Amy Power.

She was closely duenna'd by her aunt,
And 'Gus, as he passed the pair,
Would say with his eyes, "I would, but I can't,
Get near to that blessèd chair."

And the aunt to Amy, in jocular tone,
Observed, at the end of a week,
"He seems to do nothing but wander alone,
That silly young Mr. Cheek."

But 'Gus was hardly as soft as he looked,
And the sequel will prove it too.
For the time the situation he brooked,
But—he meditated a coup.

The chairman had once in the army been,
But now he was on the shelf.
For many a year he had served the Queen,
But now he was serving himself.

A fine old fellow, with grizzly beard,
Deep eye with a gleam of fun,
The cheek and forehead all scarred and seared
By steel and tropical sun.

'Twas pleasant his "Mornin,' sir!" to hear,
As by with his freight he'd slip.
Old maiden ladies all called him a dear,
And gave him a handsome tip.

To these he was very polite indeed,
But he smiled upon young or old;
And many a broken invalid
Has laughed at the yarns he's told.

He'd sketch to you every soul in the place,
If in confidential vein,
The secrets of every pretty face,
The income of every plain.

To lovers, twas said, he had lent his aid
In many an useful way.
And it wasn't solely for being paid;
He'd a school-boy's heart for play.

Though many his faults, and humble his lot,
And shiny his threadbare suit,
Not soon will the old man be forgot,
Or his soldierlike salute.

Well,—'Gus of our friend had made a friend,
As such sparks are wont to do.
He had given him cheap cigars, no end,
Judicious sixpennies too.

And he thought, "The old fellow is up to snuff.
He'll do me a turn, if he can,
Especially if I reward him enough."
And then he matured his plan.

* * * *
* * * *

One morning a party rang at the bell,
"He was sent with the chair," he said,
"As the usual chairman was very unwell,
And was forced to take to his bed.

"But he'd asked his uncle to do his work,
For the two appointed hours.
Such aid to his kinsman he could not shirk,
And he hoped it would suit the Powers."

"A most respectable substitute,"
Said Aunt, when the tale was told.
"If you're strong enough for the work, you'll suit,
fear you're a little old."

"I'm scarcely as old as you think me, ma'am,
I'm thoroughly equal to this.
Though often a trifle rheumatic I am,
You'll find that I'm not *a-miss*."

'Twas Gussy, good reader, of course, you'll know,
Usurping the chairman's place.
He had got himself up with a beard of snow,
And a patriarchal face.

And now, sweet Amy, she lived again.
So nice to be drawn along
By the arm of her enterprising swain;
So nice to be doing wrong!

So nice to be tucked from too chill breeze,
Protected by rug and wrap;
To manage a little finger squeeze
As he laid her book in her lap.

So nice, when Aunty would fall asleep
On a bench, as she did,—not oft—
To feel her lover beside her creep,
And give her a . . . something soft.

But, when the Aunty was wide awake,
He was rigid as any stone,
So much so, that once he was told to take
'Miss Amy alone! alone!

O'er much that followed we'll draw a veil,
For although the morning was hot,
He dragged her along with the strength of a whale,
To a very secluded spot.

And there they were found by uncle Power,—
Who chanced to light on the pair,
Having gone for a stroll in an evil hour,—
Together inside the chair!

The sequel:—an apoplectic fit;
A nice newspaper romance;
Recovery; scolding; and, after a bit,
A wedding, and off to France.

The moral :—in matters domestic, don't
Be too suspicious or strict.
If you think you can outwit Love, you won't;
A thousand to one you're licked.

THE SHORE SHARKS:

(A LAY OF ST. MARGARET'S BAY).

A tempest had beat on the shore all night,
And daybreak was thrusting a pallid light,
Over sea foam-flecked and the land snow-white.
The icy wind came in gusts from the north,
And tossed the snow-eddies about in wrath,
As if it were vexed with itself for shifting
And sparing the ships that anon passed drifting.
Ghostly and helpless, tide-borne, they passed:
Some with torn sail and some without mast;

Indistinct in the sleet and haze,
Fearfully close to the headland's base.
For all night the sou'-wester had blown in-shore,
With a pitiless fury and mocking roar
Which many a seaman would hear no more,
And the beach was littered with pieces of wreck,
Spars from the rigging and coops from the deck,
With, here and there, an oar, or a box,
Or a boat flung on to the goring rocks.
Cruel night and desolate morn,
Chilling the heart of wife forlorn,
Peering from cottage with haggard face
For the lugger of which never more would be trace:
Knots of fisher folk huddled together
Grave and silent, judging the weather;
Coastguard noting the work of the storm;
But, else, for miles not a human form.
Dawn is chilly and bed is warm.
Who'd be afoot such a dawn as this,
When the snow benumbs, and the hail showers hiss?

Stay! what is that object that seems to steal
Along the cliffs betwixt Dover and Deal,
Hovering over St. Margaret's Bay?
Is it an outcast, or bird of prey?
It stoops, and creeps to the cliff's steep side,
Then along the edge it goes with a glide,
Till clefts in the cliff its movements hide.
You might think it vulture or smuggling rover;
'Tis only a shore-shark out from Dover,
Prowling about in the hope to annex
Something of value from corpse or wrecks.

Look! what is that drifting along on the tide,
Now lost to the view, now seeming to ride
As if the breakers it loved or defied?
Nearer and nearer it comes to the cliff.
Is that seaweed behind? Is it corpse or skiff
It has trail of black, and is narrow and stiff.
The breakers seize it with scornful might,
And toss it ashore as if feather-light,

And the wrecker runs down, like a goat, from the height.
He drags it safe from the breakers' reach
And kneels beside it upon the beach,
And as he looks up with a chuckle grim,
Another wrecker is fronting him.
"You thought," said the other, "a march to steal,
I'm as sharp as you, and I come from Deal."

The corpse of a woman! Oh! sacred Death,
We stand in thy presence with bated breath;
We close the eyes and the hands we fold
Across the bosom, now still and unsouled;
And soon on bier we have gently laid it,
For now it belongs to Him who made it.
With these two vultures, of what avail
The tender sex, or the beauty pale,
The long dark hair, or the awful eyes?
Only a corpse, and a wrecker's prize!
They gloat above it, they turn it round
As a sheep, with mutton a shilling the pound,

Hungrily reckoning each in his mind
The gain to be got from their ghastly find.

They wrench a gem from each soft ear-lobe—
They pass coarse hands o'er the clinging robe—
Finding on bosom a golden locket,
Then purse and papers in inner pocket;
And then, with a brutal laugh, one snatched
Watch and chain and seals attached,
While the other exclaimed, with savage joy,
"It's lucky, aint it, we came, my boy?
What do yer say to this bit of a toy?"—
He lifted the hand,—poor hand,—and there,
Flashed from a ring three diamonds rare!
"Have yer got a knife?" said the man of Deal,
Clutching the hand in a grip of steel.
"O'coorse I has," said the man from Dover.
And then he fumbled his rags all over.
But never his trusty knife could he find.
"Must 'a left it," he growled, "worse luck, behind."
"Left it behind?" said the other, and laughed—

Then grasping his own by its stout bone haft,
Said, "This cutter of mine the job will do,
I'll off with the ring, and I'll keep it too."
The man from Dover sprang up like a flash
And they fell together with oath and crash.
Now, man of Deal, hold tight to your knife!
Now, man of Dover, look out for your life!

* * * *

The village urchins, ran out for play,
And there before them three corpses lay;
And the parson said, as he looked at the three,
"Which is the crueller, man or sea?"

THE POMONA.

(A LAY OF RAMSGATE.)

Though, I'll frankly confess, I'm not partial at all,
To a nice little toss in a nice little yawl;
Though, I'm sure, words would fail my aversion to utter
At having to cruise for a week in a cutter;
Though, truly absurd as it sounds, I would sooner
Conduct a four-wheeler than pilot a schooner;
I'd have you believe, spite of this, I am not
Without certain regard for a man with a yacht.

In the first place, he must be a man with a purse,
And, we all know, for that no one's ever the worse;
In the second, all round our coasts chalky and shingle-ish,
He's encouraging what is peculiarly English;
In the third, he's not seldom a jovial party
Who gives you good dinners, and welcome right hearty
In harbour, and that is a point I've been jotting
As one of the pleasantest features of yachting.
Oh! those dinners in port,
And with port gaily flowing!
I'm your real yachting sort,
When that sort of thing's going!
Yes—I do love the feeds,
The whiskey and weeds,
And telling the ladies of luffing and tacking,
With general flirting, and cheery quips cracking,
And then, when they're merry,
In good roomy wherry
The whole of the party to land again packing!
That's yachting in all its perfection for me,
It would almost induce me to take to the sea.

Now this rhyming anent harbour feasting and suction
Is only by way of jocose introduction
To a yarn of a yacht,
Which in harbour was lying
At Ramsgate, a spot
Where, it's no use denying,
Not overmuch yacht bunting's ever seen flying,
At least when compared with gay Cowes or with Ryde,
And a good many other yacht centres beside.
When you see a yacht, therefore,
That looks like a spanker,
Some fine morning bear for
This port, and drop anchor,
On pier and on beach much commotion you'll notice
And hear people asking all round whose that boat is.
I don't mean to say in the least it is wrong to
Enquire of your neighbour, whom does she belong to?
One doesn't complain of the tumult and flutter,
But a schooner you don't like to hear called a cutter.
Well, this yacht, she *was* talked of, this rakish "Pomona."
You heard nothing else but "who *can* be the owner?"

A lord or a banker
To own such a spanker."
The craft of a Crœsus you'd certainly rank her.
In good sober truth, she was really a stunner—
A schooner—a hundred and fifty odd tonner.
The fittings and crew,
All that money could do,
And a pretty fair knowledge of sea-going too;
For the boss, now on board,
Was nor banker, nor lord,
Nor king of stockbrokers, nor princeling of cotton,
Nor canny promoter of companies rotten,
Nor possessor of tin out of gold mining gotten,
Nor retired undertaker,
Nor army bootmaker,
Nor bayonet factor,
Nor ordnance contractor,
Nor popular actor,
Nor dynamite preacher,
Nor socialist teacher,
Nor Parnellite creature,

Nor lawyer, nor proctor,
Nor dentist, nor doctor,
Nor Jew money-lender, nor swell ladies' tailor,
But a naval Post Captain and good honest sailor.
He had served our good sovereign
In every quarter,
And had taken part, of her reign,
In most scenes of slaughter,
That is, that on sea or seashore were enacted,
And where, being strongest, we safely attack did.
I mean of his courage no underhand tarnishing,
I wish our good name needed just as thin varnishing.
And, having bombarded enough of coast villages,
And aided at punishings sundry, not pillages,
He had taken his leave of transactions so national,
And gone in for yachting, a pastime more rational.
An uncle had left him a handsome bequest,
And he'd bought the Pomona, and thought himself blest.
His name, I should mention, was Captain O'Lee,
And he'd sailed round to Ramsgate in search of a spree,

A romp on the beach, or romance on the pier,
And the latter he very soon got, you shall hear.

At Ramsgate a Mister Broadeller was staying,
A stout linendraper—concern very paying—
A widower, left with one daughter, a 'widder,'
Good-looking, and open to any fair bidder.
Good-looking I've said, well, that isn't the word
To express all the charms of this beautiful bird.
She was grace both in name and in form, you would own.
A rich rose, not the worse too for being full blown.

Now, Josias Broadeller in Bishopsgate Street
Was as humble a creature as well you could meet.
When a fair lady customer entered his shop,
He would welcome her in with a skip and a hop,
And a bow and a smile
In such saccharine style
That her money oozed out in a very short while.

And when she was going,
Sweet things he'd be shewing,
That lay on the counter in elegant basket,
Nice ribbons and laces,
To put in odd places,
And at figure "so low it quite shamed him to ask it."
Then, at last, when from coaxing
Cajoling and hoaxing
And compliments . . (odd, women cannot see through 'em).
She'd manage to edge her way out to her brougham,
He'd stand at his door, bowing blandly, sedately,
And murmur "Good morning, ma'am, thank you, ma'am,
greatly."

But oh! when each summer he went for his outing,
If really 'twere he, you'd be properly doubting.
A different man, now, Josias Broadeller.
You'd take him for some one, well, very much sweller.
The Granville at Ramsgate he mostly affected;
In fact, like a Duke, there was yearly expected;

A suite of apartments expensive retained for him,
Which credit for being a somebody gained for him.

One day he went down
From the top of the town
Where the Granville nigh loses its tower in the cloud,
To stroll on the pier,
And his get-up, I fear,
Was what sensitive people would designate loud.
He'd a hat, such a brim,
Made expressly for him,
With the curl of a shell,
And his necktie—ah, well—
On its bright blushing hue I'll not needlessly dwell.
Such a coat! pearly grey, of the style we call frock,
Velvet collared—I'm sorry your feelings to shock—
Buttoned loosely above, showing vest-edge and shirt,
But so strained at the waist you'd feel sure it must hurt;
With a buttonhole rosy,
As big as a posy,
And trousers so tight

Pass for breeches they might,
If the pattern had not been a check, black and white.
Below them, drab gaiters of canvas stuff thinnish,
To give, as he said, to the trousers a finish ;
And, acme of all,
A malacca, thick, tall,
With a huge golden ball,
Which he swung in his hand
With an air of command,
As to say "Of the rest of you,
Yes, e'en the best of you,
The opinion I hold is not specially high,
In fact I consider you very small fry."
I've forgotten to add,
As companion he had,
The sweet good-looking 'widder,' in costume of plaid.

They'd patrolled on the pier many times to and fro,
When they suddenly noted a sailor, below,
As he jumped from a dingey
Right on to the steps,

With a step, though old, springy
As that of Lesseps,—
And Broadeller, opining he'd left the "Pomona,"
Said, "Hulloa, you chap, what's the name of your owner?"
The sailor, he opened his eyes very wide,
Then he laughed, gave a hitch fore and aft, and replied:—
"Well,—the name of the skipper is Mister O'Lee,
But that doesn't much matter to you, sir, or me."—
'Twas the skipper himself, gentle reader, you see.
He had given his crew leave of absence on shore
And had quitted his yacht for ten minutes or more.
Said Broadeller, "Good feller, this lady is hot
Upon seeing for once the inside of a yacht.
Is your guv'nor on shore? If he is, row us out.
You'll be glad to be earning a shilling, no doubt."
Now the skipper was one
Who'd a relish for fun,
So he said with a wink, "Yes,—the thing might be done.
The guv'nor's on shore at this moment, but, Lord!
He's a rooted awersion to cockneys aboard.
Whew! I'd sooner just face one of Sanger's show lions!

If he found one aboard, ma'rm, he'd put him in irons!'
"This terrible Captain," quoth Grace, "must be pirate,
Or Tartar, to be so tremendously irate.
If the cockney were woman and nice, would he harry her?
Mightn't he rather be tempted to marry her?"—
"Can't say, ma'rm, but if she were stunnin' as you,
I wouldn't go bail what the skipper might do."
Said Broadeller, "Come, feller, no sauce. Here's your [shillin'.
Will you take us on board?"
"Yes, sir, Barkis is willin'."
They rowed to the yacht, and he showed them all over.
Cried Grace, "Well, this really is living in clover.
This pirate must be a luxurious rover.
How lovely a cabin! how tasteful each fitting!
All day in this chair I am sure I'd be sitting.
And oh what a duck of a nook! May I peep in?
Oh, how I should like that snug corner to sleep in."—
The skipper he looked at this very fair creature,
And thought she was tasteful too, fitting and feature,
And 'twouldn't be business bad to have drawn her,
And kissed her sweet lips, in that very same corner;

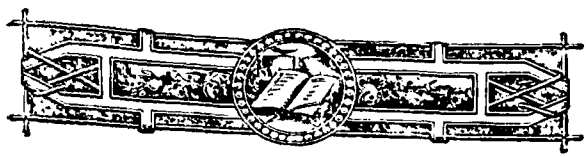
For, clearly, to judge from his smirkings and smiles,
He was falling a prey to the gay 'widder's' wiles.
Ah! her glance pierced his hide like a blade of Toledo,
Went right through his hulk like a Whitehead torpedo!
And he, who had always steered wide of the sex,
Threatened soon to become the completest of wrecks.

This, of course, wasn't noticed by Mr. Broadeller,
Who suddenly said to him, "Tell me, you feller,
Is he lib'ral in matter of wages, your skipper?"
To which he replied, "He's a regular ripper.
You've only to ask, and he opens his hand,
And lets us all live on the fat of the land.
We can do pretty much as we like on this boat.
In fact, we're a real happy fam'ly afloat.
You think this is yarnin', because it sounds rum?
Champagne isn't rum, sir. What say you to some?"
"'Pon my word," said Broadeller, who scented a madman,
"I'd rather not drink, e'en if dozens you had, man.
Look here, my good friend, pray accept a half-crown,
And . . . it's getting quite late, and I've business in town."—

Said the sailor, "All right, you shall go by-and-bye,
But I really insist our champagne you shall try."
Then he went to a locker, and took out a bottle,
And while he was twisting the wire from its throttle,
Broadeller kept wiping the drops from his forehead,
And whispering to Grace, "Oh, my dear, this is 'orrid!
It's truly alarming this den to be shut in,
Let's humour the man, or our throats he'll be cuttin'."
"Oh, nonsense," said Grace, "I approve of him rather,
And *you*'ve made a pretty good mess of it, father.
This isn't a murderous den that we're trapped in,
That 'feller's' none else than the owner and captain.'

O, luckless Broadeller! He swallowed a glass,
And he said to himself, "I'm a dolt and an ass,
And it's plain that I don't know a swell when I see him.
O Lord, who on earth could suspect it could be him."
Then he looked at the skylight, and looked at the door,
And he bleated out faintly, "Please put me on shore."
"Oh, no," was the answer, "You musn't be going,
Until you have thoroughly settled what's owing,

And that's a good shake of the hand to the skipper;
So come, now, you 'feller,' a hearty good gripper!"
'Twas given, and matters were very soon righted,
And Grace and O'Lee in a fortnight were plighted.



SAUCE PIQUANTE:

(A LAY OF DOVER).

The Rev'rend John Hotten, his work in Ind over,
Came home viâ Calais, and landed at Dover.
Though he'd spent half his life in hot water, and worries,
'Mid burning discussions, hot winds, and hot curries,
He never complained he had had a time rough of it,
In fact, he complained he had not had enough of it.
He was one of those men, to whom tropical heat,
Never matter in what, seemed a positive treat.

When others lay prostrate from sun, or went silly,
He said it was pleasant, perhaps a bit chilly;
And when you were gasping and cried for the punkah,
He'd call you a woman, or doll, or a funker.
In feuds with his Bishop and eating bones devilled,
The hotter the better, he thoroughly revelled,
And, as for the chutneys and pickles he swallowed,
God knows, if you'd tasted them, what would have followed.
When "orders," at last, sent him home on his pension,
The heated expressions he used, I won't mention;
And when at Bombay, the ship's screw began toiling,
He dropped on the deck a few tears that were boiling.

To solace himself in the cold of this climate,
Where even he said that he pitied the Primate,
He brought with him gallons of sauce he'd concocted,
So fiendishly hot that raw chillies it mock did.
He'd got the receipt from some connoisseur Brahmin,
Who extra hot spice saw a wonderful charm in,
And, having of Worcestershire sauce put a lot in,
And cayenne as much as could fairly be got in,

He turned out a compound he took with much relish,
But which, pray excuse me, I'm bound to call hellish.

Wherever he went, and whatever he faced,
A bottle of this on his table was placed.
At breakfast, lunch, dinner—no matter the meal—
With soup, fish, or game, beef or mutton or veal—
No matter the flesh—be it roast, boiled, or fried,
He deluged it all, just as if it were dried.
On the ship, coming home, captain, passengers, crew,
Of the wonderful strength of this condiment knew,
For at first some had tasted it—only a few!
At Brindisi, Corpo di Baccho! they tell
How a waiter, who stole some, was caught by his yell.
And a sleek hotel-keeper relates at Turin,
How his mouth for a fortnight was minus the skin.
At Paris, some garçons grow pale as white marble,
While telling they'd "goûté'd cette sauce de diable."
At Calais an Englishman taking it cussed hard,
And swore it must be Mephistopheles' mustard.
(His thoughts, I should say, were then running on Irving,
As seen in that character rather unnerving).

At Dover, where Hotten had sought the "Lord Warden,"
Occurred the event which I'm 'afther recordin'.

A Yankee, by name Mister Jonathan Skinner,
Was neighbour to Hotten at table d'hôte dinner,
And noticing Hotten his soup and fish plied
With this sauce from a bottle that stood by his side,
Said, "I calculate, stranger, that's public, that stuff?
P'r'aps you'll leave me a little when you've had enough."
Said Hotten, "It's mine, but it's at your disposal.
This sauce in the shadow the best of 'em throws all."
Whereat Mr. Skinner, with promptitude Yankee,
Poured most of it into his plate with a "thank'ee."
He steeped in it boldly a piece of hashed pheasant,
And ate it. It seemed the result was not pleasant.

His hands clutched the table. He writhed in his chair.
He opened his mouth, as a fish does, for air.
Then he swallowed two glasses of water, then bread:
Then some tear-drops coursed down and his visage grew
And furrows seemed forming all over his head. [red,

Then an agonised gaze he fixed blankly on space,
As men do, when the doctor bluestones a raw place.
Then he folded his arms, as if all were in vain,
And he'd only, like Stoic, to suffer the pain,
Which he did, from his look, for ten minutes at least,
When he heaved a long sigh as from torture released.

Then he turned to his neighbour and said, "Mister Parson,
This game as you've played ain't much diff'rent from arson."
"Good gracious!" cried Hotten, "what! didn't it suit you?"
"I tell yer what, stranger, some cusses 'ud shoot you.
Look 'ere now. You're parson? To preach, your vocation?
You talk now and then about Hell and 'tarnation?"—
"Well, yes," answered Hotten, "sometimes I've occasion."
"Wall, stranger, some parsons I've known in Amerikey,
And elsewhere of course, who hold forth in that very key;
I've had on them subjects, too, arguments stout with 'em,
But darn me, if *they* carried samples about with 'em."

TRICKSEY WEE!

(A LAY OF SOUTHSEA).

Cecilia Wiles was a Southsea miss
As smart as you'd wish to see.
She'd a sweet little mouth just made to kiss,
And was known as Tricksey Wee.

She'd a sweet little form, and a sweet little waist,
Such sweet little feet! oh loves!
She'd sweet little gowns in perfect taste,
And sweet little hands and gloves.

She'd a sweet little head of golden hair,
And a sweet little angel's chin.
Of shell-like ears she'd a sweet little pair,
And a sweet little creamy skin.

She'd a sweet little dimple in either cheek,
And a sweet little earnest gaze,
A sweet little voice, to sing or speak,
And sweet little artless ways.

She'd a sweet little Ma, whose sweet little spouse
In a sweet little grave abode—
And she lived with her Ma in a sweet little house,
In a sweet little villa road.

As touching hubs, she had sweet little aims—
Some sweet little lord, no less—
But, alas, she played some sweet little games,
Which led to a sweet little mess.

And these sweet little games she loved to play—
'Mid subalterns talking free
Procured for her soon the sobriquet
Of sweet little Tricksey Wee.

When hubby hunting she first began
She'd a passion blind for subs;
But in time her views far loftier ran,
And they all came in for snubs.

At Southsea balls she had programmes twain,
One real, and the other false,
And you sometimes wrote your name in vain
On the latter, and lost your valse.

For a likelier man had asked meanwhile
For a dance, the very same;
And she'd give him the genuine card, with a smile,
And . . . there was the fellow's name.

You could only bow, and stammer, and think
Much more than you liked to say.
And a jeering comrade would ask, with a wink,
"Old chap, what's the matter? eh?"

Then, next, she'd suitors three at a time,
And she'd make believe to all—
And she'd name to each, with aplomb sublime,
A different time to call.

And they'd come with their rosy buttonholes,
And drivel, in proper course;
And say to themselves, deluded souls,
Each, "*I* am the winning horse."

One day, though, she made a terrible slip.
That *she* should the hours forget!
The paymaster bold of a royal ship
At the door his captain met.

"Hulloa!" said the latter, with angry frown,
"Pray what are you doing here?
You asked me for leave, sir, to *go to town!*
You've told me a lie, I fear."

"I'm going to town, sir. I've only tacked
Just out of my course some miles.
But, Captain, I'll tell you the honest fact
I adore Cecilia Wiles.

"And she fixed an hour for myself to call,
And the hour she fixed was three."
Then the Captain roared, "Confound it all,
It's the hour she fixed for *me!*"

"I venture to hope, sir," the other replied,
"It's joking you are, sir, now.
She's as good as promised to be my bride—
You're too late, sir, anyhow!"

Yelled the Captain, "Late? why she said the same
To me but the other night!
By George, sir, she's played us a pretty game,
And, by George, it serves us right.

"So, now, sir, to make a needless fuss,
I am sure, like me, you're loth.
Cecilia has made two fools of us—
So we'll go to London, *both*.

"And you'll dine with me at my club, the Rag,
And forget the hussy's glance;
And we'll keep it dark, lest tongues should wag,
And injure the hussy's chance."

But Tricksey Wee, not always played
With victims so kind and true;
Betraying herself, she was once betrayed,
And there rose a fine ado.

And now for a time the offers dropped
To a curate's or two in the year,
And after awhile e'en curates stopped,
They got such fleas in the ear.

For Tricksey Wee no secret made
That she couldn't abide the Church,
And the Royal Services, I'm afraid,
Had left her quite in the lurch.

From ship to ship tips speedily fly,
And from marching corps to corps.
The men stand off, and you wonder why—
Camaraderie. Nothing more.

* * * *

On Southsea Pier you will often see
An old maid reading a book;
She is all that is left of Tricksey Wee,
And she hasn't a sweet little look.

She has sharp little eyes and a sharp little nose—
And sharp little pointed chin.
On either cheek a false little rose—
And dry little powdered skin.

She's a shrunk little form, and a hard little waist,
And her thin little ears are red.
In a black little gown her form is cased,
For her sweet little Ma is dead.

When the band strikes up, you may see her roam,
Sad, to and fro on the Pier,
And when it breaks into "Home, Sweet Home,"
You may half detect a tear.

Now, maidens all, if you wish to shun
Poor Tricksey Wee's sad fate,
In a love affair, when once begun,
Whatever you do, *run straight.*

RICHBOROUGH CASTLE.

(A LAY OF ROMAN KENT).

The mosses grow,
And wild flowers blow
On Richboro's hoary walls.
Where, once, the wave
Their base did lave,
The swain his cattle calls.

In place of tide
The pastures wide
Now stretch in calm expanse,
From Sandwich sleeping
To Ramsgate peeping
Across the cliffs askance.

The ruins frown
O'er Stour, deep down
In narrow margin set;
Once noble stream
You now would deem
It almost rivulet.

Its waters ran
In widening span
Across to steep Ebbe's Fleet.
Then swept away
By Pegwell Bay
The open sea to meet.

The silent ground
By Richboro' mound
Bore once a busy town;
Seafaring men
Approached it then,
And gave it some renown.

From landing place
It grew apace
In Rome's exultant day,
To stately fort
And wealthy port
Where many a galley lay.

And when the pride
Of Rome, hard tried
By Teuton foemen, paled,
The legion last
That Romeward passed,
From Richboro' haven sailed.

Time onward flew;
The Saxon threw
His thraldom o'er the land,
Then Rome once more,
To Kentish shore
Despatched a conquering band.

No spear or shield
Their ships revealed,
No eagles borne above.
This time they came
In Jesus' name
To conquer us by love.

Twice Rome has wound
Her arms around
Old England's throbbing heart ;
Once by the sword,
Once for our Lord.
How glorious either part !

DISMAL JIM.

(A LAY OF EASTBOURNE).

Who's ever been to Eastbourne and not seen the Misses Crow?

Eight sisters walking two and two, or sitting in a row.

Such slender forms, such fuzzy heads were surely never seen.

Their ages? well, by steady stages rising from eighteen.

Poor Doctor Crow had welcomed three with true parental joy,

And when the fourth arrived he mildly said "Lor! not a boy?"

The fifth, "A female! oh! I say!" he faltered to the nurse.

The sixth wrung out a "Dash it," and the seventh, Oh, much worse!

Henceforth a change came over him. From being cheery, gay,
He looked at everybody in a savage sort of way.
And when the eighth and last appeared, what Doctor Crow observed,
To put in public print I'm not sufficiently strong-nerved.

As time flew on, the Doctor grew more pitiably sad:
He'd sit upon the sea-wall brooding, melancholy mad.
The boatmen and the begging bandsmen all avoided him,
Throughout the whole of Eastbourne he was known as dismal Jim.

His practice dwindled down till he had scarcely any left,
Though capital he had, life seemed of interest bereft.
The only time he brightened up was when he took a fee
For introducing to the world some (other's) little she.

He took in this a relish fierce, and if the father swore,
He'd rush outside and laugh outright for hours upon the shore.

In fact when neighbours saw him thus with strange convulsions torn,
They nudged each other, whispering "Another girl is born.'

Year followed year, the damsels grew, and one by one came out;
They never missed a tennis party, concert, tea, or rout.
But, oddly, never one was asked to quit her maiden state.
Then Jim grew idiotic, shrinking down to half his weight.

He walked about as if he were a pile of bones and tweed.
The hair fell from his cranium, his whiskers ran to seed.
And, later on, you would have seen him, when he took the air,
Go slowly wheeled along the under-terrace in a chair.

Another year and all was up. An end to all his gloom.
Eight nosegays bright are daily placed on dismal Jimmy's tomb.
Let's drop a tear upon it, and bewail his dismal fate;
And take good care, if we must pair, not to have daughters eight.

THE SHADE OF HAROLD.

(A LAY OF PEVENSEY).

On Pevensey's low-lying shore
  Beside the dirging wave,
King Harold's corpse was buried
  In a now-forgotten grave.
No sculptured shrine, no effigy,
  No marble marks the place,
Where sleeps our patriot King, the last
  Of Anglo-Saxon race.

"Go," cried the taunting Conqueror,
"And lay him by the strand;
His resting-place shall, like his vows,
Be of the shifting sand.
And let his Spirit, if it can,
Keep ghostly watch and ward,
Along the coasts, he, living, failed
To safeguard with his sword."

The towered keep of Pevensey—
Where now the night winds moan
Among the rustling ivy masses
And the crumbling stone,—
Stood then grim witness, frowning
On the burial done below
On shelving shore, by ocean's roar
Eight hundred years ago.

The lofty crest of Beachy Head
Loomed through the driving spray,
And Hastings' hills, like shadowy mourners,
Watched it far away.

The wailing gusts swept inland
Over moor and down and cliff,
To Senlac's field, where Saxon dead
Were lying stark and stiff.

And now at fall of night, when moon
Disputes with mist and cloud,
And voice of breakers sounds along
The shingle hoarse and loud,
You'll see the Shade of Harold pass,
His broad axe in his hand,
With helm on head, and stately tread,
To watch and guard the land.

Aye—still the dauntless soul of Harold
Lives along our coasts;
The soul that never blenched or quailed
At threats or hostile hosts;
The soul that freely spent itself
For country and for right;
The hour that soul departs from us
Farewell to England's might.

THE GOOD GUIDE.

(A LAY OF FOLKESTONE).

The Reverend Optimus Best
Was a priest of sympathies wide.
For souls that were seeking rest,
He was known as an excellent guide.

He preached in a bijou church
That stood not far from the Lees.
All England over you'd search
For a sweeter chapel of ease.

There was ease in the padded pews;
There was ease in the verger's face;
There was ease in the preacher's views:
There was ease all over the place.

On the altar a glimmer of gold
And velvet and flowers and light.
Rich banners in silken fold
Drooped over it left and right.

The day came mellow and soft
Through the windows' varied hue.
The eye might wander aloft
Amid stars upon azure blue.

The strains of the organ stole
From a gilded niche at the side,
And flooded your wondering soul
With its overpowering tide.

The singers in serried array
Of violet, white, and black,
Rolled out the psalms of the day,
And answered each other back.

At a gold spread-eagle the priest
Droned out from the sacred tome,
And you asked yourself when he ceased,
"Can I be in England or Rome?"

A goodly picture the scene
Through the arch of the reredos,
Well crowned with the golden sheen
Of the huge surmounting Cross.

There proudly The Emblem stood;
On vestments it blazed in force;
On banner and stone and wood;
But was rarely in the discourse.

The preacher preferred to speak
Of the joys, and the peace, above;
And his argument, week by week,
Was that ours is a creed of love.

He loved on this theme to dwell,
And the broadness of the word.
To so dismal a topic as Hell
He hardly ever referred.

On death he would lightly touch;
He had more to say about Life;
You should love your neighbour much,
Not even excepting his wife.

Of course, in a Christian way,
In a pure and brotherly sense.
By brotherly love, he would say,
The good you may do is immense.

On love for the Church he'd dilate,
And love for the priest, as a priest;
You should love the collection plate,
And love two sittings at least.

You should love, though confession was barred,
To consult a priest of God,
Who knew that virtue was hard,
And would lovingly use the rod.

And sinners of all sorts would,
If they laid their troubles bare,
Be guided and understood,
And told of what to beware.

* * * *
* * * *

But, alas! it must be confessed,
Though the reason may some perplex,
That the Reverend Optimus Best
Wasn't sought by the sterner sex.

Perhaps it was man's crass pride,
Or the narrowness of his mind.
No matter. He acted as guide
To lambs of the gentler kind.

They sought him, the dears, in shoals;
They came with offerings meet;
They cast their fluttering souls,
And their slippers, at his feet.

Maidens, and wives forsooth,
Bowed down their comely necks,
And spinsters, long in the tooth,
Wrote out substantial cheques.

* * * *
* * * *

To Folkestone a party came,
In a recent year of grace;
A Mister de Cuir by name,
And his wife had a pretty face.

He was rich, in the City known,
A prince of the leather trade.
There's nothing like leather, you'll own,
When out of it gold is made.

He took an expensive house
In the Castle Hill Avenue.
A woman of fashion, his spouse;
'Twas the only site that would do.

She, Maud, was a child of romance.
She lived in a dream of art.
At a concert she'd sit in a trance;
To the tenor she'd lose her heart.

Stage love would her being thrall,
Stage sorrow would make her weep.
She would sit and thrill in her stall
While her husband would go to sleep.

He, John, was of coarser kind ;
A solid and stolid man.
He seldom could lift his mind
Above the level of tan.

Her novels he could not stand,
All fiction, he said, was trash.
" She had better just try her hand
At teaching the cook to hash.

" She stoop to the kitchen ? No.
Instead of advising the cook,
To an organ recital she'd go,
Or devour a rubbishy book ! "

Thence, tears and stampings ; and oath
From John, I am grieved to say,
And estrangement between them both
Enduring for many a day.

And the bickerings, once began,
Grew soon to desperate case.
The coach matrimonial ran
Downhill at a terrible pace.

Till at last it had come to this,
That to Folkestone he brought her down;
Then, with never a word or a kiss,
Shot back, like a bolt, to town.

* * * *
* * * *

You will hardly need to be told
That a woman, left in the lurch,
Yearns often to be consoled,
Not always by Mother Church.

You will therefore be glad to learn
That Mrs. de Cuir preferred,
In her lonely estate to turn
To the minister's soothing word.

To the bijou Church it chanced
One Sunday morning she went,
The singing her taste entranced,
The preacher was eloquent.

He was neither a prig, nor prim,
And he gave such sound advice,
She thought that confiding in him
Would be extremely nice.

And so, in time, it befell,
That Maud to the Reverend Best,
Found occasion her griefs to tell,
And how she was seeking rest.

She did it in right good faith—
In sweet simplicity, then;
But, oh! as the Wise Man saith,
Put never your trust in men.

Very close the communion grew,
Absorbing the task he plied;
And, almost before she knew,
He became her regular guide.

He guided her every day,
He guided her down to the beach;
There are sermons in stones, they say;
There seemed to be one in each.

He guided her over the Lees,
He guided her down to the boat,
And he guided her, if you please,
To places more remote.

In fact, I should really grieve,
Your propriety to alarm,
But I swear that I saw, one eve,
He was guiding her with his arm.

It was round her flexible waist—
Of course, with a brotherly touch.
Such things are a matter of taste,
And depend on the parties much.

MORAL.

If a seaside billet you search
For your wife, don't let her reside
Near a bijou Chapel or Church,
Where the priest is a lady's guide.

THE SILENT FAMILY.

(A LAY OF WORTHING).

If weary you're feeling of racket and riot,
And, yearning for Polar or Sabbathlike quiet,
Are bent on some solitude peopled unearthing,
I can't recommend you a better than Worthing.
If, after two months from your date of arriving,
You have the good fortune to still be surviving,
You'll say, "Well, indeed, this *is* thoroughly tranquil,"
And much, if you're grateful, yours truly you thank will.

Ah me! very good for the soul is confession,
So frankly I'll tell you the sort of impression,
It made upon me,
This white tomb by the sea,
Where in every street
Solemn people you meet,
Never smiling or laughing,
Or joking, or chaffing;
No bustle, no rush,
But a sort of sad hush,
And so crushing a silence, so saintly a calm,
If you whistled at all, you would whistle a psalm,
And, if asked, "Where is Worthing, near where, and in what land?"
You'd say, "Well, it's not, but it *should* be, in Scotland."

If you stroll by the beach,
You will see ladies fair,
But you'll notice that each
Has an ennuyé'd air,
Or is deep in a book

In some wind-sheltered nook,
Or beneath an umbrella ;
And, if by some chance
You should get a stray glance,
It will say, "Get away, you impertinent fellah!"
As for men—well, a curate
Or paterfamilias,
Who alone could endure it
And not grow a silly ass ;
Or a victim of gout
In an easy bath chair
Being trundled about
In the glorious air ;
For, though cynic, I'll do it the justice to own
Worthing truly can boast of the purest ozone ;
Or perhaps you may light on
A tourist from Brighton
Who's studying his Bradshaw in search of the train
That will earliest take him to Brighton again.
This is what I observed—I declare it with sorrow—
And I swore the third day I would bolt on the morrow.

But even a sinner
Must think of his dinner,
So I said the same day, "Worthing, ere that I leave you,
I'll solace myself with a feed at 'the Seaview.'"
I sat at my table,
And ere I was able
To render account of most excellent soup,
Three persons swift glided,
And sat near where I did;
Of Worthing they proved a most typical group.

They were mother and father, and oh! such a daughter!
Such lips and such eyes, dealing general slaughter.
A diamond, yes, of the very first water.
So lovely, a Sultan, I'm sure, would have bought her
If deals of the sort were permitted in Albion,
And Sultans could say
To their Viziers, "Just pay
Whatsoever they ask, and, Bismillah, I *shall* be on."

Auburn hair, such a roll!
Like a net for the soul;

Twisted up on her crown ;
What a river, when down !
Tiny feet such a pair !
A complexion so fair,
It was like alabaster or peaches, I swear.
Such a form ! such . . . . excuse me,
And pray don't abuse me,—
She was truly a creature a poet might rave about,
And lovers rejected sink into their grave about.

As he gave me my turbot, I questioned the waiter,
Of course sotto voce, concerning the pater,
Who sat, stiff and huge, like a massive church column
Of Inigo Jones's, as silent and solemn.
"Come, tell me his name,
Can you say whence he came ?
And, ' I added to this in a tone of real honey—
" I'd like much to know if the fellow's got money."
" Well, sorr," said the waiter,
She's a jewl of a craythur,

An iligant dish, sorr,
As morrtal could wish, sorr,
If I were a Marquis, yer honor, I'd ate her."—
"O spare me, pray, this,
I can judge of the Miss.
I enquired, Pat, rather
Concerning the father."—
"Ah 'faith, so yer did. Well, your honor, I'd say
The owld ooman's another rale jewl in her way.
She'd make, sorr, a broth of a mother-in-law,
For, excipt at her males, she ne'er opins her jaw."—
Then I said with a D,
"Let the 'owld ooman' be;
Dash it, tell if you can,
Something touching the man."
But he couldn't, alas,
For the man tapped his glass,
And demanded the joint,
Not by word, but a point,
Nothing else; for the game,
And the sweetmeats the same;

Not a sound; nothing else but a point and a wave,
As if he'd emerged, just to dine, from his grave.

They remained, through the meal,
Like three statues of steel;
Not a sound, not a word
At their table I heard,
E'en laconic as these
"Pass the salt, if you please."
Course succeeded on course,
Not a syllable fell,
Till you wondered perforce,
Were they dumb, or unwell,
Or had Worthing ozone put them under a spell.
"Yes, I've hit it," I thought—
"The poor devil has caught
The complaint of the place, and, alas, not alone he;
They're Worthingized badly, I'll wager a pony."
The dinner concluded, they rose in their gloom,
And noiselessly vanished, like ghosts, from the room.

Then said I to the waiter, "Already I've bid you all
Tell me concerning this strange individual.

Is he ghost? is he human?
Or what does he do, man?"

"Well, sorr, I'm not sure if he isn't a Quaker.
By thrade anyhow he's a big undertaker.
He comes to this place, now and then, for a holiday,
And spends what yer honor would scarce call a jolly day.
His manners his thrade, sorr, remarkably suit,
If he wasn't a maisther, you'd think him a mute."

"Undertaker!" I groaned. "It is past my belief.
She the child of a maker of coffins? oh, grief!"
But a gent sitting near me, I'm happy to state,
Didn't think the objection of very much weight.
As he said to me after, "What could the thing matter?
I'm nuts upon girls who don't giggle or chatter,
And I'll marry this one, or go mad as a hatter."

So now they are married. The conquest was swift,
Very little was said, but quite plain was the drift.
When he asked her, her answer laconic you'll guess.
After all, there's a deal in that little word 'yes'.

THE MAIDEN'S GRAVE.

(A LAY OF SOMPTNING, NEAR WORTHING).

Sweet Somptning, thy tree-shaded grassy churchyard,
On the knoll by thy leafy lane,
With the distant sea,
Brings an echo to me,
Of a story of love and pain.
Whoe'er to thy calm, world-hardened goes,
Will learn what is meant by the word 'repose.'

The spirit of peace hath his home in thee,
On the breast of thy swelling down;

And his pinions wave
Over every grave,
Unsoiled by the breath of town.
No marvel the wish of the maiden fair,
" When I go to God, let me wait Him there."

A maiden and lover and father came,
Not many long years ago,
From the capital's riot
To dream in the quiet
Of Worthing, on shore below.
And she said, " In Somptning, I'd like to lie,
With the dirge of its trees for my lullaby."

But little she dreamed in her daze of love,
That the darkness of death was near.
They went for a sail,
And a sudden gale
Made of Worthing's beach her bier.
She sleeps in the churchyard grassy and still;
'Twas the maiden's wish, and the Heavenly Will.

SHE CALLS ME COLE.

(A LAY OF SHORNCLIFFE).

One Major Cole Sackville Plantagenet "Bwown,"
Of the Hundred and seventh Hussars,
Was famed for his cool, supercilious "fwown,"
And the slaughter he made of his R's.

He would glare through an eye-glass cocked over his eye
At lieutenants and other small folk,
And if ever to chaff him they ventured to "twy,"
They found that it wasn't a joke.

He would say, "Who are *you*, wetched subalterns, eh?
That you dare a field officer chaff?
I'd teach you good manners if I had my way,
Now-a-days you're too wowdy by half."

"'Faith, we are," said a sub, "Major, darlin', that's thrue,"
(Tim O'Hagan this youngster by name),
"We couldn't do better than imitate you,
Shure the ladies all tell us the same."

"At Shorncliffe, they say, not a Major exists,
Who can talk such nate blarney to them,"
The Major, he gave his moustache a few twists,
And he turned on his heel with "Ahem!"

And he said to himself, "That Hibernian sub
Is too fwee with his bwogue and his say,
He'd be vastly impwoved by a stiff course of snub,
So I'll start with the tweatment to-day."

The sub, I should say, was in Major Bwown's troop,
And he soon got a dose, I'm afraid;
The Major would never to bullying stoop,
But the sub wasn't smart on parade.

So he caught it all hot when for leave he applied,
But the only retort of the lad
Was "Ah, Major, ye're lost when I'm not by your side,
I'll stand by me Major, bedad."

But he said in his heart, "One of these lucky days
I'll be aven with Major Cole Bwown."
He was ware of the Major's insidious ways
With the ladies of Folkestone town.

Now Major Cole Bwown had a weakness like most.
He believed not a maid could withstand
His smile, and to subalterns often he'd boast
What he'd done with a squeeze of the hand.

And it came to the knowledge of some at the Mess,
That he flirted with Mistress O'Flynn,
A charming young widow, who held, you may guess,
That coquetting was scarcely a sin.

One evening from Folkestone to Mess he came back,—
Irreproachable mufti, of course—
And he took with a chuckle his cue from the rack,
And he played with unusual force.

He fluked Tim O'Hagan each time that he shot,
Till he felt quite a love for the youth.
Of whiskies and sodas he swallowed a lot,
And he said, "Tim, I'll tell you the twuth.

I twust, when you've gwown, you'll have equal succés;
She's an angel, she is, on my soul!"
"'Faith, Major, I'm shure of it. What did she say?"
"Not much, but she called me Cole."

"Now, did she?" said Tim. "Shure her object is plain,
It's as clear as a man could desire.
By callin' ye Coal, ten to one she must mane
You're the fuel to feed her fire.

"There's poetry for ye! There's passion sublime!
'Faith, her flame she can scarcely conthroll.
I, once, fell in love, sorr, but divil a time
Did my lady love call me a Coal."

The Major replied, "Stop your blathewing, pway.
There's no question of fuel or flame.
The Cole that she meant isn't spelt with an A,
And it's simply my Chwistian name."

Said Tim, "Then the matther assumes a worrse forrm
In her heart you've been digging a hole;
The relations betwixt ye must be pretty warrm,
For the lady to call ye Cole."

"Shut up," roared the Major. "Have done with your cheek."
Then he added, with one of his glares,—
"It's the vewy last time to a sub I shall speak,
At least upon pwivate affairs."

"Ah, Major, you're angry; forgive and forget;
Let's dhrown it all deep in the bowl;
And to prove you've forgiven me, Major, you'll let
Your poor subaltern call ye Cole?"

The Major went out with an oath; and a scowl
O'er his handsome features stole,
As there echoed behind him a whoop and a howl
And a chorus "She calls me Cole."

And O'Hagan he danced and he rapped his poll
With his fist, as you'd beat a drum,
And he said to himself "She calls him Cole,
I think that my turn has come."

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Next day when the Major to Folkestone went,
With the posy he daily bought
In Sandgate, to Mistress O'Flinn to present,
A crowd his attention caught.

It was gathered in front of a hoarding high
At the end of the Sandgate Road.
He planted his eye-glass firm in his eye,
And up to the hoarding strode.

And a quiet old gentleman said to him,—
"That placard's extremely droll.
Can there be any meaning, Sir, comic or grim,
In that notice 'She calls me Cole'?"

The Major he stared, and he gasped for breath,
And his eye-glass fell from its place.
His cheek grew crimson, then pale as death,
And he said with averted face:—

"It's pwobably meant, sir, for some low joke,
Or a dwama they're going to play;
No doubt it's an advertising stwoke;"—
And with that he stalked away.

He hurried along. Upon every wall,
Post, paling, or pillar he passed,
The fatal inscription in letters tall
And tawdry was pasted fast.

He reached the Lees. He flung himself down,
O'ercome with annoyance and heat;
He groaned, "I suppose it's all over the town."
It was there, anyhow, on the seat.

He rushed to the Club with a savage stride
Like a tiger off to his den;
And there he beheld in a file, outside,
A party of sandwich men.

Each carried a huge imposing board
Adorned with a flaring scroll,
On which was the hateful sentence scored
In yellow, "She calls me Cole."

He stole inside. In the entrance hall
Was the placard nailed to the oak,
And round it a group of members. All
Said, "Brown, can you see the joke?"

He called for a tumbler of "bwandy, neat,"
And polished it off at a drain;
Then he hailed a cab, and he drove to meet
The Dover and London train.

In London he strove dull care to drown,
In an evening on the loose,
And he said, as he fell asleep, "Cole Bwown,
You must cook that youngster's goose."

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The morning found him in calmer vein,
And his thoughts less vengeful ran;
"I could punish that boy," he said, "that's plain,
But that's hardly the work for a man."

"I'll show him, by Jove, that above poor spite,
His Major possesses a soul;
And, dash it, the whole thing serves me wight,
For saying 'She calls me Cole.'"

Returned to the corps he never referred,
Except with a laugh, to the trick;
O'Hagan got never an unkind word,
And he said, "The Major's a brick."

And a sense of overpowering shame
Grew up in the youngster's heart,
As he thought, at night, of his thoughtless game,
That was taken in such good part.

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And he longed to say to the Major flat,
"I'm ashamed of the game I played;"
But the Major gave never a chance of that.
And Tim was dumb and afraid.

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Years passed; the Regiment went abroad,
And did its duty, like most,
And carved its way, with pistol and sword,
To the heart of the Afghan host.

One morning, a desperate charge was made
At a mass of the foemen's horse;
A minute or two of work with the blade,
And the thing was done, of course.

But the Major's charger was shot, and fell,
And the Major rose, half blind,
And the Afghan swordsmen closed, with a yell,
Round the victim left behind.

He faced them proudly—the savage group,
As an Englishman faces death,
When a horseman came with a ringing whoop,
And the group was gone in a breath.

And O'Hagan stood by the Major's side,
As smart from his seat he slid,
And sobbed, "Ah, Major, I've only tried
To atone for what I did."

And the Major said, "You have saved my life,
And I thank you, Tim, from my soul.
The charming widow shall be my wife.
And . . . . Tim, you may call me Cole."

NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLE.

(A LAY OF WHEREVER YOU LIKE.)

No place in particular this is a lay of,
Big actions for libel this being a day of.
The fact I record I can guarantee true,
But to whereabouts accurate can't give a clue.
Suffice it to say, and I'll brave a whole panel,
The scene was a bathing-place this side the Channel.

My friend, Surgeon-General Bumper, retired,
One morning to me, in mood liberal, wired :—
"Run down for the night from your Temple called Inner ;
The wind is due South, and I'll stand you a dinner."

"Delightful old fellow!" I said to myself,
"Leading cases for once shall remain on the shelf;
I want a sea breeze and a little change badly."
So promptly I telegraphed, "Done with you, gladly."
I wrote on my door "gone to hold consultation,"
And bolted off straight to Victoria Station.
Victoria? well—'twasn't that—no, indeed—you
Will recognise, doubtless, that's said to mislead you.
An hour-and-a-half, not much longer at any rate—
Such wonderful speed locomotives now generate—
Delivered me safely, in tweed-and-round-hat form,
With Bumper to meet me, on thingamy platform.
We strolled till the West the short daylight was dim in,
And tipped the street niggers, and ogled the women.
With interludes prudent of porter and oysters,
Remembrance of which still my bosom with joy stirs;
And then, having worked up an appetite splendid,
Our way to the restaurant gaily we wended.

My friend, Doctor Bumper, I, tell you I'm sure may,
Was one part a doctor, and three parts a gourmet.

He didn't believe in medicinal treating,
His cure for all ills was good drinking and eating.
When asked at some symptom suspicious to look,
He'd say, "My good fellow, that's due to your cook.
It's simply a case of demoralized stomach,
You've eaten rich dishes, and all sorts of rum muck.'
You'd seek his advice for sore throat or lumbago,
He'd say, "To the deuce all your physicking may go!
You'd better such out of your window be pitchin'—
The root of your malady lies in your kitchen.
A course of rank living has lowered your tone, sir,
You'll shortly be nothing but blubber and bone, sir."
Then, out he would blurt with much chuckle and laughter
A tale of a Lord, who, though married, ran after
His cook, whom my lady, when once he was missing,
Behind the stair curtains discovered him kissing.
"Oh, doctor," she cried, "I have no friend but you now!
Do tell me, dear doctor; oh, what would you do now?"
To which he replied, "You know best what to brook, ma'am.
But, anyhow, don't go discharging the cook, ma'am.
Your grief, time, or husband the third might efface, ma'am.

But cook, such as Jane, you could never replace, ma'am."
From which, you will see, that the dear Surgeon-General
Was somewhat self-seeking; but, bless you, so men are all.
This yarn being now for the tenth time repeated,
We soon at our dinner were cosily seated.
"Come, Harry," said Bumper, "what wine shall I call for?"
"Well, frankly, champagne, sir, I don't care at all for.
I hope you won't think indiscretion I border,
If Bordeaux of some sort I beg you to order."
"So be it," said Bumper, "your views my own meet, sir.
We can't do much harm with good Château Lafitte, sir.
Here, waiter, I hope for your wines you can answer?"
"This 'ouse only deals in the best wines of France, sir!"
"Then bring up a bottle!" "At once," said the waiter,
And brought up a bottle all cobwebby later.
"This wine, gents," said he, "as you knows, his expensive,
We 'as'nt for such, gents, a market hextensive.
It's honly when grand Sturgeons-General dine here,
Us, waiters, uncorks such uncommon good wine, here."
"Confound you," said Bumper, "a little less talking!
Attend to your work, sir, and do the uncorking."

Whereon, with touch tender as if he were handling
A treasure, or Spanish Infanta were dandling,
With motion majestic as that of old Druid,
The waiter uncorked it, and poured out the fluid.
Oh goodness! oh gracious! oh gallant old Bumper!
I ne'er should have thought him so active a jumper.
He sprang at the waiter, and gave him a thumper.
"So that's what you sell as the best wine of France, sir?
For sell such as that to a cell you shall dance, sir!"
Then Bumper collapsed, and gasps came from his throttle.
The first rush of wine bore a living bluebottle!

OLD GRUMPY:

(A LAY OF FOLKESTONE AND DOVER).

Old General Grumpy resided
  At Folkestone, a fact you would note,
If often you fancied, as I did,
  To look at the incoming Boat.

The outgoing, too, I should mention,
  Though rarely I saw it myself.
Of liver he had a distension,
  And so had been placed on the shelf.

Henceforth being minus employment,
The packets he'd potter about,
And found a prodigious enjoyment
In seeing them in and out.

Whenever the weather was calmish,
To the pier in dudgeon he'd crawl.
"They're none of 'em like to be qualmish,"
He'd mutter, "confound 'em all."

But when a tempest was blowing
And matters looked queer at sea,
Like a two-year-old he'd be going,
And he'd chuckle and grin with glee.

And he'd station himself at the staircase,
Where the passengers came on shore,
And whenever he spotted a fair case
Of mal de mer he would roar.

If he saw an elderly fellow
Steal up, as if in a dream,
With his eyes all glassy and yellow,
With laughter he'd fairly scream.

And he'd toddle back to his quarters,
As if his duty he'd done,
And drink two whisky and waters,
And swear it was splendid fun.

From Folkestone one day he vanished,
All suddenly, like a ghost.
Some said he was dead, some banished
To a fat West Indian post.

But the truth I stumbled over;
To Dover he'd simply run,
Because he could see at Dover
Two boats to the Folkestone one.

There was double food for his malice
In the double serviced port.
The Ostend Boat or the Calais
Was certain to furnish sport.

So now, to beguile his leisure
Occasions came fast and thick;
And he'd also a novel pleasure
In seeing Royalty sick.

For Royalty often crosses
From Calais to Dover pier;
And Channel lurches and tosses
Make even Royalty queer.

I'm told that he went on crutches
One day when he'd got the gout,
To see a German Grand Duchess
Land after a nasty bout.

And he said to a friend, "Old chappy,
I'm almost cured of my ills;
I really return quite happy,
She looked so white in the gills."

But at last, as might be expected
From standing about in the damp,
Old Grumpy became affected
With a cold of an awkward stamp.

And the end of it was, to flannel
And nurses he gave the slip,
And he had to cross *the* channel
In a never returning ship.

That ship we shall all pay fare on,
Although we be hard as bricks.
The captain is known as Charon,
The channel is known as Styx.

A NICE LODGING.

(A LAY OF BRIGHTON).

The fair Mrs. Mooner a lodging-house kept,
Where unpilfered you dined, and unpunctured you slept.
You would find it a difficult matter to light on
A buxomer lodging-house keeper in Brighton.

She'd been married of course—they all have—as a girl
And Mooner was something just under an Earl.
He got missing one day, as hubs do in romances,
And left her, poor thing, in reduced circumstances.

You could tell she had moved once in circles polite
From the business sort of a hand she could write,
And a habit of syllables drolly misplacing,
As when she said "Brighton was—Ho! so *em*bracing!"

A gentleman came to her lodging one day,
In the dining room suite for the summer to stay.
He'd a round little body, the noblest of noses,
And rejoiced in the name of Nathaniel Moses.

The plump Arabella—for that was her name—
In Nathaniel's bosom soon kindled a flame.
When in costume coquettish she brought in the dishes,
His eyes were like those of an amorous fish's.

Her hands were so plump, and her neck was so white,
That poor Moses for eating had scant appetite.
All sorts of excuse he invented to ring for her.
He swore before long he would do anything for her.

One evening to touch those plump fingers he tried
As she lifted the cover beside him, and sighed—
"Allow me," he said, with the warmth of a lover,
And a nice little struggle they had for the cover.

Another fine evening he asked her to stay
For a chat when the dinner was taken away.
Poor thing! she observed, "It was kind of him, very."
And then she grew talkative, sipping the sherry.

She sketched all her life from her infantine years,
And finished it up with a deluge of tears,
Which went to the heart of the sensitive Moses.
The next day he bought her two two-penny roses.

And asked her to go for a stroll on the Pier,
When her duties were over. The music would cheer.
They went, and he said how delighted he'd be at her
Letting him take her some night to the Theatre.

The Aquarium too, with its vaults and its tanks,
And she said " Mister Moses, why certainly, thanks,"
And he also proposed that resort of the million
The open-air concerts behind the Pavilion.

For music she said she'd a relish quite sharp,
And she asked him if ever he played the Jew's harp,—
A question that put him almost in a passion.
" Oh lor! you *don't* say that it's gone out of fashion ? "

I mustn't omit, too, to mention his " Damn ! "
When he stood her a lunch, and she begged for cold ham.
And she added, what made him look really quite vicious—
" Jerusalem artichokes would be delicious."

In spite of these hitches, however, the flame
Of the little Jew's passion intenser became,
Till, one night, failing quite his impulses to smother,
He gave her a kiss, and . . . she gave him another.

He called her his darling, his sweet little thing,
And gave her a purse and a brummagem ring,
And she sat on his knee, with disclosure of stocking—
Oh! Madam, for shame, it was really too shocking.

The door opened softly behind them, and there
Stood a sight that erected all Moses's hair—
A giant, who said, and it sounded like hissing,
"I'm only your husband, my dear, that was missing."

Shrieked poor Arabella, "Oh! Lord, if it ain't,"
Then prone on the hearth-rug she sank in a faint.
"As for you," said the giant to Moses, "I knows yer,
Just pay up a 'undred or else I'll expose yer.

"'Taint no use your whining, quite plain is my course,
A cheque for the 'undred, or else a diworce."
The poor little Jew knew how sadly he'd blundered,
So, groaning, he wrote out a cheque for the hundred.

Months after, he wasn't best pleased when he heard
Of the landlady's wiles he was victim the third.
All the three had to pay pretty dear for their kissing;
So strange, too, the husband so often was missing.

Was it all a neat plant—was it swindle, forsooth?
Moses never yet dared to unravel the truth.
The moral:—It's almost as risky as shady,
To carry on games with a Brighton landlady.

THREE TEAS.

(A LAY OF PORTSMOUTH).

Three subalterns entered a club one day,—
The modern day,
I am bound to say—
When soldiers are serious rather than gay,
And they sat themselves down in the coffee room,
With an air of sedateness, if not of gloom.

They all wore spectacles, two were bald,
And one of them mildly the waiter called,

And said, as that personage bland enquired
If a whisky and soda might be required,—
"You'll bring, if you please,
To us, three teas."
Upon which, a second, as if inspired,
Or by thoughts of something ecstatic fired,
Ejaculated, "We'd like some muffin,
And, waiter, mind you put butter enough in."

A portly form from an arm-chair rose,
And muttered and spluttered and blew its nose,
And stared at the youths who had called for tea.
'Twas an ancient Colonel of Horse, C.B.
And he said with a groan
That would melt a stone
To another old fossil reclining there
In front of the fire in another arm-chair:—
"When I was a lad,
Men were men, by gad,
And they didn't go stuffin'
With tea and muffin.

They drank good port,
And not seldom brandy;
Were lovers of sport,
Were mostly dandy;
With bottle and sabre alike were handy;
And if you should venture to mention tea,
Would treat you, by Jove, to a good round D.
Those were times, old friend,
That have come to an end,
But, query, is it a case of mend?
Your tea consumers may all be right,
But I'm hanged if I think they're the men to fight.

"They'll show you that Blucher
Was nought but a fluker;
Array you a list of arguments strong
To prove that e'en Wellington oft was wrong;
And you yourself have declared that they've told yer
That Marlborough was but a second-rate soldier.
There's nothing, in fact, they're not ready to teach.

Well—they're clever enough,
But are they the stuff,
That will lead a charge home, sir, or carry a breach?"

And the other old fossil replied; "Do you think
That men should be measured by what they drink?
These fellows sip tea
And shun soda and B,
But they needn't be cowards, it seems to me.
Tea, I'm told, is a beverage harmless enough,
And a man, who eats muffins, need not be a muff.
I liked the old days
And their daredevil ways,
And I speak of the past with regret and praise,
But—though subalterns fill
Their interiors with tea,
Which appears woman's tipple to you and me,—
Let us trust, after all, they will fight with a will,
And show themselves true-hearted Englishmen still.

THE ROYAL ESCAPE.

(A LAY OF SHOREHAM).

At the battle of Worcester King Charles the Second
Had scarcely the luck upon which he had reckoned;
For, though he fought gamely, this Stuart so polished
By rugged old Cromwell was roughly demolished.
We've all of us read
How the poor fellow fled
And by kind-hearted peasants was hidden and fed,
Till he turned up one night, on
The one street of Brighton,

And got a shake-down at the loyal King's Head.
'Twas a pleasant relief
'Mid his wand'rings and grief
To see such a sign-board hung over the door,
And to feel that his own
From its place hadn't flown
Like the parent King's Head just two twelvemonths before.
Four and forty hard days
In the woods and byeways
Had made his young majesty sensibly thinner;
So, arrived in such plight,
We'll conceive his delight
When he sat himself down to a jolly good dinner.
We can almost imagine him wearily joking,
And the honest old landlord with loyalty choking,
As he placed on the table
The best he was able,
And, filling two beakers of mellow old sack,
Said low to his guest, "May you soon, sire, be back—"
While the guest, in reply,
With a wink in his eye,

Said, "Landlord, it's possible quite I may try,
And you'll give me some sack, spiced with your joviality,
This time, though, they've giv'n me the sack, in reality!"

Next morning right early
A mariner burly
Crept stealthily in, and stood puffing before 'em;—
"I've got a good boat, sir,
As e'er was afloat, sir,
She's ready to sail, sir, this morning from Shoreham.
Here's health to the King! quick returning I wish him,
And death to the traitors who're trying to dish him!"
"Devotion like this, sir, my royal pride flatters all.
What is your name?"
"An' it please you, sire, Tattersall.
If Cromwell were here, sire, I'd blow him to shatters all!"
"Good friend," rejoined Charles, "rather painful my attitude.
Coin I have none, but I'll pay you with gratitude."
"Sire," said the mariner, "pardon my oddity,—
Even than coin, that's a scarcer commodity."

"Some day, at least, I will shew you, good fellow,
If ingratitude's black, that my gratitude's yellow,
The colour of honest good gold of the realm, sir,—
So quick to your boat and good luck to your helm, sir!"
They started that morning and met no mischance,
And, ere the night fell, Charles was landed in France.

Nine years had elapsed, Cromwell lay in his grave,
And Charles came in triumph from over the wave.
How changed from the man that from Shoreham had slunk!
How odd, too, the rake summoned back by a Monk!

In the whirl of his pleasures,
And ill-advised measures,
In gaddings and gibes,
And accepting French bribes,
In scandalous sport
And the vice of the Court,
'Mid defeats by the Dutch—
May we never see such!
'Mid the nation's unrest,
And the scourge of the pest,

'Mid the burning of London
And commerce all undone,
He'd wholly forgotten the mariner bold
Who'd saved him for loyalty, hardly for gold;
And the honest old sailor one day said in sad jest, "I
Think I'd do well in reminding his majesty.
Memories short seem the mode with minds regal;
They're lifted above matters moral or legal;
And claims for past services often but bore 'em.
We'll see what he'll say to the sailor from Shoreham."

So Tattersall hoisted his canvas again,
And sailed up the Thames, where he noted with pain
The ravage the Dutchmen had done in their raid
When they burnt Chatham dockyard and London dismayed.
On the banks, as he passed, scarce a cottage left standing;
The people all begging at every landing;
No ships riding down, no masts towering in dock;
Here and there a hull showing its ribs, just to mock;
Walls blackened of factories roofless and void;
Forts battered to splinters and churches destroyed;

And he said to himself, as came thicker and faster,
The farther he sailed, each grim proof of disaster,
"I saved him from Cromwell, because he was King,
But I'm darned if I'm sure 'twas the very best thing.
Curse old Oliver hot as I did in his day,
At least he kept foreign marauders away."

Then he passed Greenwich town, and soon breasted the City,
Whose smouldering waste filled his bosom with pity;
From Tower to Temple a desolate heap
Of burnt tumbling ruin o'er which you could weep.
And he thought—"Oh, my country, how heavy the rod
That smites thee! Oh land, art thou hateful to God?"
Then he let go the anchor, and brought with a tight haul
His snug little craft 'neath the windows of Whitehall.

The church bells were ringing, the sun it was setting;
King Charles the land's troubles in feast was forgetting,
Surrounded by sycophant nobles and mistresses,
Playing with theirs or they playing with his tresses;

Sorrow and starving, without, in the street,
Music within, and the twinkling of feet,
When a page made obeisance and said a sea captain
Asked boon of an audience. "Jail have him clapped in!'
The courtiers shouted, "What insolence hardened!"—
Continued the page, "Sire, he asks to be pardoned.
He says he knows nothing of etiquette royal,
Court manners he's none, but a heart true and loyal.
His name, Sire, is Tattersall, says that you know him,
And promised one day some slight favor to shew him"—
"Admit him," cried Charles, "'Tis no trifle I owe him.
My honor has slept. I recall now his platitude:—
'Money is scarce, but e'en scarcer is gratitude.'"
Then, soon as the sailor came forward and faced him,
King Charles took his hand in his own, and embraced him,
And said with emotion, "Let none this man blame,
'Tis I, King of England, who ought to feel shame.
This ring that, in honor, I place on his hand
Bears witness to staunch heart as beats in the land.
This sea dog has read a just lesson to me,
Would to God you were all as good subjects as he!"

Later on the bold seaman, 'tis pleasant to mention,
Received from King Charles a right generous pension,
And his craft on the Navy List, spite of red tape,
Was proudly enrolled, as the "Royal Escape."

SAINT AUGUSTINE.

(A LAY OF PEGWELL BAY).

A crowd of folk in Ramsgate take
Their well-earned holiday,
And love to feast on tea and shrimp
In smiling Pegwell Bay.
Too many of them fail to know,
Or in their memory fix,
The stirring scenes enacted there
About five ninety-six.

The region's favoured now by what
Of wealth and nasal grace
Exists in men and maidens
Of the Israelitish race.

In times gone by, its shallow shores
Received the saintly band,
That first displayed the Cross of Christ,
To this benighted land.

King Ethelbert, the Pagan,
Then possessed our island throne,
Descendant of the Saxon chiefs
That made our fields their own;
And Berthe, Princess of France, reclined
In wedlock by his side.
Though Pagan, he'd no narrow views,
And took a Christian bride.

One morn some sails were sighted,
Bearing down upon the bay.
No spear or shield beneath them
Scared the fishermen away.
No vicious Viking craft were these,
Foreboding death or loss.
The sole device they carried
Was a towering silver cross.

The passing boatmen wondered
What this emblem could portend,
And, hailing, got for answer:—
"This no badge of foe, but friend!
The sign of Christian brotherhood,
Of blessed truce we bring
From God who sends glad tidings
To your country and your king."

Then, drifting down with wind and tide,
They anchored off Ebbe's Fleet,
While from the vessels landward came
The sound of anthem sweet.
And those on shore could see a figure
Stately take its stand
Upon the foremost prow, and seem
To bless them with its hand.

It was the Monk Augustine,
Sent by Gregory the Pope,
To teach our fierce forefathers
Christian love and Christian hope.

A noble work, and noble hearts,
Which to forget were ill.
All honour to these foreign men,
Who bore us such goodwill.

They landed. Not a savage cry
Or threatening hand was raised.
No Saxon churl molested them,
Or scoffed them, God be praised.
'Twould seem our race in that resembles
Much the race of yore;
No alien with a righteous cause
Need fear our friendly shore.

When Ethelbert was told the strangers
Stood on Kentish soil,
Demanding only freedom
To enlighten, not despoil,
He summoned them to meet him
By the sacred oak that stood,
Revered above its fellow trees,
In Thanet's deepest wood.

The morning broke—a morning big
With fate for good or ill,—
And Englishmen who love their faith
And land must bless it still.
The King arose, and, sallying forth,
Ere scarce the town awoke,
From Canterbury, crossed the Stour,
And sought the sacred oak.

There, grand in rough simplicity,
He sat him on the ground,
And all his stalwart Saxon warriors
Ranged themselves around;
While underneath their shaggy brows,
The grim looks seemed to say:
"What want these meddling Latins here?
We've priests as good as they."

Then through the leafy arches
Came the chant's upswelling strain,
And, nearer, nearer winding
From below the Christian train.

The silver cross before them borne
Aloft, and, on a board,
By rude but pious art conceived,
The semblance of our Lord.

Imploring in their chant
God's benediction on the isle;
They came and stood before the King,
And silence reigned awhile.
Just forty men they stood—Augustine
Topping all the rest,
Sublime of port and presence,—
And abode the King's behest.

King Ethelbert commanded them
To sit, and speak their mind,
To trust to Saxon justice,
And to leave all fears behind.
Augustine then their coming told,
And laid their object bare;
Declaring love to God and man
Alone had brought them there.

He told them all the story
Of the suffering of Christ,
And how he was, for Saxons,
As for others, sacrificed ;
And how, if King and people
Would acknowledge Him for Lord,
The Light of God would take the place
Of darkness and the sword.

He ceased, and rose imposing,
Like a prophet, rapt, inspired ;
Eyes straining up to God's own seat,
Hands clenched and visage fired.
A murmur of astonishment
Ran round from side to side,
Till Ethelbert commanded peace,
And slowly thus replied :—

" Your words are fair, and promises,
But they are new and strange ;
The customs of the Saxon
Have deep roots. We love not change.

We quit not, at a summons,
All the doctrines of our race;
In time perchance our customs
May to better yield a place.

"But, as you come from distant lands,
Us, Saxon men, to tell
What you believe is true and good,
We will entreat you well.
Nay, more, we give you leave in peace
To preach your Christian faith,
And Saxon, who dare hinder you,
Shall feel my wrath and wraith."

'Twas thus the noble Pagan
Gave his welcome to the Word,
And cold the heart of Englishman
Who reads and is not stirred.
And when in Pegwell Bay we cast
Our eyes along the sand,
We'll think of those who landed there,
To Christianize our land.

A HAUNTED HOUSE.

(A LAY OF ROMNEY MARSH).

Not far from Ashford and Romney Marsh
Where the sheep in their thousands browse,
And the smugglers bold
Had their homes of old,
There stands a manorial house.
Inhabited still, it is haunted they say,
By ghostly noises by night and day.

A long lane leads to the entrance drive,
And oft as you stroll along,
You will suddenly start
At the sound of a cart
And hoofs and crack of a thong;
You'll jump to the hedge to save your heels,
But there's never a cart nor a sign of wheels.

If you know the host, and you stay the night,
And you're sitting to smoke or sup,
As you're alive,
On the carriage drive,
The wheels will come rattling up.
By the front-door steps you will hear them stop,
And you'll hear on the gravel a footfall drop.

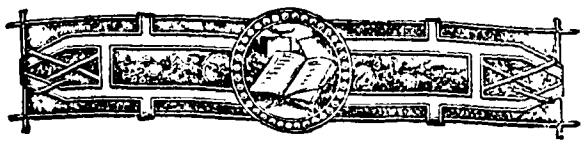
The hostess and I played chess one night,
Awaiting the host from town.
The clock struck ten,
And the wheels came then,

And we heard the feet spring down.
" It isn't the ghost ! " said my hostess fair,
" Hark ! hubby's step on the creaking stair !

" He's weary, perhaps, and gone to his room.
Excuse him you will no doubt ?"
Then she said " Good night,"
And " You see I'm right,
For the light in the hall is out."
Then she went upstairs and I took my pipe,
And sniffed at my baccy so sweet and ripe.

How pleasant it is by the firelight glow
To enjoy a smoke-wreathed dream.
Before I could fill,
My heart stood still
At the sound of a piercing scream.
I rushed to her room, thrust open the door,
No husband there ; she, swooned, on the floor.

We never could tell how the lamp went out,
Or account for the creaking stair.
The chambermaids said
They had gone to bed
At nine. They're a frisky pair.
A chambermaid's word or a smuggler's ghost—
I hardly know which to suspect the most.



"CORNET" GORE.

(A LAY OF PORTSMOUTH).

The Dashty-second Plungers were a very sporting set;
They'd ride you any country, or they'd take you any bet.
No sort there was of devilment not practised by this Corps,
And foremost of these spirits wild was Captain Tommy Gore.

He stood just five foot nothing ere he got into his socks.
A little dapper frame he had, and mass of flaxen locks.
A smile was ever playing on his rosy cherub face,
And every year he broke a rib or two in steeplechase.

In Polo match at Hurlingham proverbial were his feats;
He almost threatened once to take the shine out of the Peats,
That trio tall, that hunt the ball, regardless of their necks,
And, what is more, this Captain Gore was worshipped by the sex.

His tastes were costly, as you see, and, mournful to relate,
By needs beset, he ran up debt, at an alarming rate.
The nosey ones appeased his duns, and filled his empty purse,
But Captain Gore's finances only went from bad to worse.

A Derby loss, an Ascot cross, a Goodwood week awry,
His balance low, at Cox & Co., had drained completely dry.
Then suddenly an order came, the Plungers were to sail;
His Israelitish friends at once went for him tooth and nail.

He said he'd pay some later day, and so he would, of course,
But dues are dues, and Jews are Jews, and sue without remorse.

And Moses swore that Captain Gore should settle ere he sailed,
Or bailiffs grim should nobble him for certain, if he failed.

Then Captain Gore informed the Corps of his impending fate,
And all his comrades vowed that he should sail at any rate.
They'd stick at nought for such good sort, they'd e'en the bailiffs smash!
"Oh, no," said he, "we'd best agree to something not so rash."

And so, in solemn conclave, in the senior Captain's hut,
At Shorncliffe camp, that very night, when every mess was shut,
These worthies put their heads together over whisky brews,
And hatched a pretty little plot to "do" the cruel Jews.

* * * * *

'Longside the wharf at Portsmouth lay the gallant Malabar,
And all alive her gangways were with stout marine and tar.
The clatter of the loading cranes produced a deafening din,
As pile on pile of baggage from the shore was hoisted in.

Then came the scream of train approaching, then the train in view.
And then the soldiers cheering out to home a hoarse adieu.
Then voice stentorian marshalling the regiment from the train,
And then the band loud-clanging out some spirit-stirring strain.

Small knots of friends and relatives, there, close beside the ship;
In many an eye a blinding tear, a prayer on many a lip;
A pressing to the gangway as the men filed up on board;
And mother's sad "Good-bye, my son," to be in memory stored.

Three bailiffs stout took stand about the embarcation place,
And with them, too, a little Jew with eager foxy face.
He watched the Dashty-second as it formed upon the quay,
And scrutinized each officer in most obtrusive way.

So much, that one Lieutenant said, "Pray, what have you in view?

I've half a mind to pull your nose, you dirty little Jew!"

"I'se looking, Shir, for Captain Gore, I wansh to shake hish hand."

"Lor, bless you," said the Sub., "He's gone to India overland!"

The Jew drew back and looked again the officers all o'er;

The Colonel, Major, Captains, Subs.; no sign of Captain Gore!

Then to the Colonel, in despair, he turned, and dared to say:—

"I begsh your pardon, Colonel, but ish Captain Gore avay?"—

The Colonel roared, "Nice impudence this is, upon my soul!

An insult, Sir, by Jingo, to my Regiment's muster roll!

I tell you, every soul is present, officer or man,

And if you seek for Captain Gore, why—find him if you can."

All steadily the gallant Plungers bore their kits on board,
The messes formed, the watches told, and all the baggage stored.
The band stood playing on the deck, and 'mid the bandsmen smart
One Cornet blew such fearful blasts it really made you start.

This Cornet was a little man, with very roguish eye,
Black curly hair, and black moustaches twisted very high;
In fact, you'll learn, good reader, I am sure, without surprise,
'Twas Captain Gore himself got up in trumpeter's disguise.

He played away right merrily. Departure for the East
Appeared to have no terrors or regrets, for him at least.
In truth, to Captain Gore, it was relief approaching joy
To feel the stately Malabar glide proudly from her buoy.

But, ere the stream, with hissing steam, the noble vessel cleft,
And, as the Jew stood dazed and vexed, like victim of a theft,

Gore tore the black moustaches off, and then the wig, and cap,
And waved them high in either hand and cried "Good-bye, old chap!"

"I'll meet your bills, like other ills, when I possess the cash.
O Moses dear, it's pretty clear, of this you've made a hash.
You'll have to wait, I beg to state, a month, or two, or more,
But cheer up, do, you dear old Jew, and trust to 'Cornet' Gore!"

The Malabar steamed slowly off, and Gore his fingers kissed;
The dear old Jew turned green and blue, and, choking, shook his fist;
And, as the bailiffs led him off to some adjacent bar,
They heard "Adieu, you dear old Jew!" borne faintly from afar.

DOVER CASTLE.

(A LAY OF DOVER.)

O! grand old keep,
That lookest down,
From cliff-top steep,
O'er sea and town,
Anon with smile, anon with frown—
With jocund air and welcoming smile,
When sunlight warms thy hoary pile;
With frown, when mist and chilling cloud
Thy ghostly battlements enshroud—

What exile, steaming forth to France,
But rests on thee his farewell glance?
What wanderer, coming from the East,
But loves on thee his eyes to feast?
What Englishman can on thee gaze
Without a dream of bygone days?
Of eras Norman, Saxon, Roman?
Of civil feud and foreign foeman?
Of many a scene and many a story
Of England's woe and England's glory?
Thou standest like a record grim,
Of England's past from ages dim.
And, scarred albeit by storm and time,
Art strong and stern as in thy prime;
Of ken the proudest, stuff the hardest—
Fit symbol of the land thou guardest.

O'er walls and moats
And noble gate,
Thy proud flag floats,
That others hate,

Or fear, or envy, or admire!
Through midday blaze to sunset's fire,
It streams upon the breeze unfurled,
And teaches freedom to the world!

Long may thy towering mass of stone,
And flag of crosses three,
Proclaim a State as stable grown,
And people ever free!
And may the blows of alien foes
Upon that Empire fall
As harmless as the rains and snows
That beat upon thy wall!

THE UXORIOUS GROCER.

(A LAY OF BRIGHTON).

Josiah Scales was a grocer sleek
As ever observe you can.
In jams he was strong, in soul he was weak,
He was such an uxorious man.

Matilda, his wife, had golden hair,
Pink skin and a globular form;
And his eyes would follow her everywhere
With an admiration warm.

When she sat in the cashier-box in his shop
Receipting in roundhand clear,
In the midst of damping the sugar he'd stop
To waft her an oily leer.

He loved each morning to see her place
In her stays her solid charms,
And he'd fumble needlessly over a lace,
And gloat on her shining arms.

At breakfast time he'd insist to see
The letters she had by post;
And he'd squeeze her hand as she passed the tea,
And always butter her toast.

You would never see her in town alone;
If you wanted, your wish he'd baulk;
He'd stick to her close, as a dog to a bone,
And arm in arm they would walk.

If a visitor chanced upon *her* to call
When a customer wanted *him*,
He was fit to devour that customer, all,
And rend him limb from limb..

And the serving over, he'd toss away
His apron, and rush behind;
If the caller were male, that livelong day
She'd get a bit of his mind.

In course of time, as the pledges came,
Not always in single file,
More ardent, if possible, grew his flame,
More idiotic his smile.

And the wife grew weary of so much love,
And sometimes shewed it, indeed.
She said one day as she fastened her glove—
"It isn't a shadow I need.

"I've got one already, my dear, of my own.
There—pray release my waist.
I wish you would let me go out alone,
Wife-dogging is such bad taste."

•

And Matilda was firm, and had her way,
Though *he* wasn't at ease at all;
And she went for a walk, by herself, each day,
That is—but we won't forestall.

* * * *

I mustn't omit the important fact
That Scales an assistant had—
A youth of very unusual tact—
A handy and honest lad.

He had curly locks as black as a coal,
White teeth and a roguish eye.
Very much above treacle he had a soul,
And his name was Archie Spry.

I'm not quite sure it occurred to Scales,
At first, there was ought to fear.
The assistant was quick, and increased the sales,
And the master was mostly near.

But, alas, in time, as such natures will,
He took to a jealous mood.
And where there was none, suspected ill,
And over the ill would brood.

For jealousy just he'd no earthly cause,
At least that is what I think.
But jealousy knows not reason's laws—
He declared he surprised a wink.

And another day, as Archie and she
Were arranging tins on a stand—
He swore that her manner was over-free,
And that Archie touched her hand.

And, oh! one day when the lad was out
Conveying a parcel of rice—
He went out, too, and he saw, no doubt,
What to him looked scarcely nice.

Matilda and Spry were walking close,
And it wasn't a rapid pace.
She'd a blush on her cheek, like a cabbage rose,
And a grin was on Archie's face.

Her rose was simply the rose of health,
And his grin was the grin of fun.
They'd met by accident, not by stealth—
But—there—the mischief was done.

"Aha! *Now*, well he could understand,
Why she wanted to walk,—*alone!*
Her doings were truly underhand.
She was deuced smart, he must own!"

To all the protestations of both
He offered but gibe and flout—
Poor Scales this time was terribly wroth,
And—he turned his assistant out!

Aye—there and then—and he raged and swore
He had often observed them kiss!
And Archie Spry, as he left the door,
Said, "Sir, you'll repent of this!"

* * * *

A year or so had glided away,
And Scales's business throve—
So he said to his buxom spouse one day,
"We will have an outing, love!

"We'll go to Brighton and spend a week
In the glorious month of June."
Matilda gratefully offered her cheek
And supported an extra spoon.

They went to Brighton. O, wasn't it hot?
And didn't she love her bath?
"And swimming's such exercise, is it not?
I'll soon be thin as a lath?"

So every morning she had her swim,
And he watched her close from the beach;
In her bathing dress she enchanted him,
And she looked like a dewy peach.

And he'd take his post behind her machine,
With a big binocular glass;
And he'd say to himself "She's a regular Queen,"
As by, like a fish, she'd pass.

And he'd sit and watch, with never a stir,
And with ecstasy on his face;
"There isn't a woman to equal her,"
He'd murmur, "in all the place."

One morning, as usual, he took his seat,
Binocular well in hand;
When he suddenly sprang in wrath to his feet,
And danced about on the sand.

For next to him squatted another man,
With another binocular too;
Who lifted it up, and proceeded to scan
Matilda without ado.

And he talked aloud, this impudent cove,
As if there were no one near;
"She's a stunner, she is!" he said, "by Jove!
And she makes me feel quite queer!

"By Jeremy! wait a moment, though,
That face, that golden hair!
The form is a form that I ought to know!
Matilda! I do declare!"

Another second, and Scales had hold
Of the other's throat with a cry;
And he savagely hissed, as over they rolled,
"I'll do for you now, young Spry!"

But Spry was Spry not only in name,
And he floored poor Scales in a trice,
And said, "I was innocent, Scales, of blame,
Though your wife *is* rather nice.

"And I'll teach you now your temper to lose,
And act like a bear at large!"
Then he summoned one of the local Blues,
And gave poor Scales in charge.

And he cried as the Blues removed poor Scales—
"If they lock you up for life,
And other proper protection fails,
I'll look well after your wife!"

MORAL.

A fool is the man who has no control
Of the love he bears his spouse;
If jealousy once gets hold of his soul,
Good-bye to peace in his house!

THE WRECK OF THE LALLA ROOKH.

(A LAY OF WORTHING).

In November, eighteen fifty,
When the winds were fierce and shifty,
And the seas swept with a grinding roar,
On Worthing's stony beach,
Scudding swiftly on before 'em
Drove the Lalla Rookh for Shoreham,
Barque ill-fated, heavy freighted,
For a port she ne'er would reach!

Broke the morning wild and gusty,
And the boatmen, sage and trusty,
Shook their heads and gavè you warning
Not to put to sea that day.
"There's some dirty weather brewin',
There'll be ugly business doin'!"
"Will that barque fetch up to Shoreham?"
"Shouldn't like, sir, yet, to say."

"For the wind, sir, looks like shiftin',
And to leeward she'll be driftin',
And—just look, sir—it has caught her
Dead athwart her starboard bow.
No—it warn't, sir, quite judicious,
With the weather lookin' wicious,
To hug the land so closely—
It's an awkward case, sir, now!"

Darker grew the sky each minute,
And a storm, with fury in it,
From the south-east, hoarsely growling,
Burst upon the labouring ship.

Lightning rent the clouds asunder—
Hoarser, hoarser, growled the thunder,
And the savage, hissing breakers,
Seemed to hold her in a grip.

Nearer, nearer, came she landwards—
Ever nearer, nearer, sandwards,
Where the foam and fleck were showing
Where good ship might find a grave.
And the surf leaped up around her,
And on rock and sandbank ground her,
And the watchers cried, "It's over
If we haven't strength to save."

Then stood forth a good and true man
Of the fisher folk, James Newman,
And he cried, "I can't stand idle
While those shrieking fellows die.
It's quite possible to save 'em—
Perils are there? well, let's brave 'em,
They're our brother men, mates, aren't they?
Harkye, I, for one, shall try!"

Then his two sons and his brother
Said each, "*I* will, for another,"—
And James Edwards and six more at once
Stood forth and made a crew.
Then they ran a boat out quickly,
Through the rollers, coming thickly,
And the foam dashed from the oar-blades,
Now on high, now lost to view.

On they lifted, fiercely straining,
And the goal were nearly gaining,
When a monster sea burst on them
With a rush and sullen roar.
With a desperate strength they drove her,
But the good boat toppled over,
And of all that brave eleven,
Living soul ne'er reached the shore.

Ye who love our folk seafaring,
And their kind hearts and their daring,
Bend your steps some summer evening
'Mid Broadwater's roadside graves.

There on tombstone, plain and hoary,
You can read this simple story,
And lament these gallant victims
To the fury of the waves.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

THE DANCE GNOME.

(A LAY OF MARGATE).

The Assembly Rooms at Margate can an individual show,
The like of whom to witness you'd have many miles to go,
A personage combining—for we will not matters mince—
The appearance of a Brummell with the manners of a Prince.

An evening dress of perfect fit, a star upon his breast,
A kerchief red, like order, peeping out 'twixt shirt and vest;

A figure gliding noiselessly, and bowing as it goes,
A sunny face, a nameless grace pervading all the pose.

A well-gloved hand, "Good evening," bland, a soft, seductive voice,
That asks you "Will you dance, sir?—any lady to your choice?"
A gentle look of triumph as he leads you to your girl;
A wink?—No, beam of pleasure as you plunge into the whirl.

This gentleman, whose age suggests the rich autumnal leaf,
Has clearly never known an hour's anxiety or grief.
Existence must have been to him one long delicious dream;
He is, in truth, a walking smile—a real embodied beam.

If even *he* assured you he had ever had a bout
With worry or adversity, you'd shake your head in doubt;
If even *he* persisted he'd been ever ill or feeble,
You'd say "Mon cher, excuse me, but, ha! ha! that's 'pas possible'."

He must have breathed from infancy an air of joy and dance,
Of music, soft hand pressure, whisper, captivating glance.
There is, there must be, in his blood a strain of eerie race.
You question this? You've only got to look into his face.

No ordinary mortal has that mild benignant eye,
That strange mysterious twinkle which 'twere vulgar to call sly;
No earth-begotten creature has that light aerial trip,
A sprite alone could have that subtle quiver of the lip.

I have it! Yes. He *is* a gnome, who condescends to live
On earth two hours each evening, us a taste of bliss to give,
A glimpse of fairy worlds, of Terpsichorean air a whiff,
And then he wafts himself away to some adjacent cliff.

He lies *perdu* till nine at night does this eccentric gnome,
His Sundays, too, like working men and clerks (?) he spends at home.
He makes just six appearances per week, to man, in all,
Save when some afternoon he blithely guides a children's ball.

A children's ball! That's real enough. We'll drop all fancy flights,
And wish our Master of the Revels many joyous nights.
If ladies bruise our spirit with rebuff, caprice, or whim,
It's worth a shilling, anyhow, to sit and gaze at him.

BEACHY HEAD; OR THE COAST-GUARD'S RIDE.

(A LAY OF EASTBOURNE.)

Bold headland, that riseth abrupt from the tide,
Of seamen the terror, of Eastbourne the pride;
With the grass on thy summit; beneath, the white foam;
Playground of the tempest, of seabird the home;
When rambling I walk
Up thy pathways of chalk,
And coastguard note standing,
Long spyglass in hand,
With an eye on each landing,
Below on the strand,

I summon to mind,—amid mem'ries of wrecks,—
Yarns of lawless adventure, and contraband specs,
Of hairbreadth escapes, hot revenge, and cool pluck,
Of smugglers in trouble and smugglers in luck;
And I say to myself, in that wild smuggling time,
"There was oft a grim humour mixed up with the crime."
One legend comes back from the past, in particular,
As I peer down the sea-wall, almost perpendicular.

Bill Jackson, Will Carter, Jack Cobby, and others,
In smuggling exploits were a nice band of brothers.
All the South Eastern coast under terror they laid,
And in landing French goods drove a flourishing trade.
They were pretty expert with gun, cudgel, or knife,
And were not over squeamish in taking a life;
For which little pastime—not being quite legal—
They later received elevation—not regal.
One morning, disguised as three yokels, in quest
Of the eggs of the puffin, chough, gull, and the rest,
They asked the coastguardsman on guard at the time,
For leave down the headland's steep fissures to climb.

"Oh, go if you like," said the officer gruff,
"The stones at the bottom you'll find pretty rough;
When you feel yourselves going, just give me a shout;
The parish'll bury you neatly, no doubt."
So the yokels crept agilely over the edge,
And let themselves down to some out-o'-sight ledge;
Where, instead of proceeding the birds' eggs to prig,
They quickly began a broad platform to dig.
They scooped it deep into the headland's white face,
Where, unseen from above, they could haul from the base;
And, at night, at high tide, from a boat below, handy,
They'd haul to this platform the kegs of French brandy;
And store them there snug, till the coast being clear,
They'd shift them, atop, into carts waiting near.
One night, though, they carelessly left the line bringing
The kegs to the platform, about the base swinging,
And, passing along as he made his last round,
A coastguardsman saw it nigh touching the ground.
"Ho-Ho!" cried the officer, bent on reward,
"Here is some little game that I'll baulk, by the Lord!
I'll watch this 'ere line, and I'll see where it goes,
It may be a discovery, splendid, who knows?"

Then he lashed, neat and taut, to the end of the rope,
To serve as a crossbar, his long telescope,
And conceived the design of there taking the place
Of a keg, and ascending alone the cliff's face.
Then he looked to his pistol, his cutlass, and knife,
And thought of his children at home, and his wife,
And he said to himself, "If I carry this out,
'Twill be a good day for the fam'ly no doubt.
If I'm killed, well, I'm killed; but my popgun I've got—
After all, these bold smugglers ain't much of a lot."

The sunset paled fast, and the night fell apace;
The shadows grew dense on the headland's wan face;
The tide rippled in and enveloped its base;
The wings of the seafowl ceased fluttering on high,
And—save for the splash of the waves, and the sigh
Of the mournful night breeze, and the call of a bird
From some cranny far up—not a sound could be heard.
The coastguard sat perched on a ledge, and astride
Of the crossbar he'd raised out of reach of the tide,

And fearlessly waited his dare-devil ride.
'Twas midnight. No moon. A mist over the land.
The darkness so thick you could scarce see your hand.
On a sudden the rope seemed to shake, then grew stiff;
Then rose with its burden just brushing the cliff.
Rash rider, now hold with cool grasp to your rope,
Clench firmly your pistol, or else you've no hope!
Three smugglers are there on the platform above,
And they'll hardly receive you with welcome of love.

Up higher and higher, by foot and by inch,
The coastguard ascended. Then creak of a winch
Fell harsh on his ear, and then, down through the gloom
A voice and a sentence that sounded like doom :—
"This keg is a stiff 'un; it's queer to my mind
How we managed to leave such a big 'un behind;
I'm blowed if I don't think they're foolin' us, mates,
If they are, there'll be mischief as sure as the fates!
Look out." Then the "keg" with a lurch came to land,
And the coastguard stood facing them, pistol in hand.

One turned on him swiftly a lantern's pale light,
And exclaimed, "Why it's Galley! we've got yer, lad, tight!"
Then Galley said grimly—"So—this is your den.
I suppose some or other of us are dead men."
Then click of the trigger, and flash of the pan;
The pistol missed fire! Then they closed with their man.
A struggle—oaths—groans—Galley thrust to the ground—
And, 'spite stout resistance, o'erpowered and bound.

"Now then," said Bill Jackson, "we'll go up atop,
And we'll give you, friend Galley, a beautiful drop.
There's others up there that must see it all done,
They'll scarcely be pleased if they're choused of the fun.
You mounted as smart as rope dancer or clown,
We'll see at what sort of a pace you'll go down."
Then, they went up atop, and 'mid jesting and laughter
Hauled Galley tight-lashed to the summit soon after;
And, holding at once a burlesque of a court,
Said "a pitch from the cliff would give excellent sport,
But they'd hit on a measure of quieter sort.

They'd push him, quite tenderly, over the edge
Feet downwards, and hands hanging on to a ledge,
And then, so that justice might quite be appeased,
They'd leave him to drop in the sea when he pleased."
A bandage was bound round the wretched man's eyes,
And they bore him, unheeding his prayers or his cries,
And pushed him right over, tight bound, and each hand
Holding on with mad clutch to the chalk, grass, and sand.
Then they said "In *your own hands* we leave your existence."
And soon their steps died away far in the distance.

In vain he attempted, with strugglings and twists,
To push off the bandage—but, bound at the wrists,
He failed to get touch of it. God! what a time!
What agony meted for doing no crime!
Fainter, fainter his shouts and unnoticed, alas!
Fainter, fainter his clutch on the slippery grass!
Sharper, sharper his desperate yearnings for life.
Fiercer, fiercer his sobs for his children and wife.
Then a numbness of arm—hand—a reeling of brain—
Fingers losing their hold! soon an end to the pain!

A prayer for God's mercy! a moan and . . . let go!
He lands on a bottom just two feet below.

They'd placed him, the smugglers, thus bandaged and bound,
On the edge of a *chalk pit*, not very profound,
And pinned on his coat a scrip bearing this text:—
"We spare you this time, you're a dead man the next."

THE GERMAN BAND.

(A LAY OF NO PLACE IN PARTICULAR).

Of all the drawbacks to our seaside places,
And goodness knows that plenty are to hand,
There's one that all the others quite effaces,
And that's the squealing of the German Band.

'Twould seem as if our flat-capped Teuton cousins
Developed in their midst a ruthless breed,
Whose *raison d'être* is to come here by dozens,
To torture us with trombone and with reed.

I wonder in old days what sort of bandsmen
Came with the Saxon chiefs to Britain's shore.
If like to those of modern times, our landsmen
Fled, doubtless, their performances before.

. . .

A good half-dozen of such fiends orchestral,
With instruments they'd groaned upon for years,
Would speedily have swept from homes ancestral
The Britons, then, if they had any ears.

THE VICTORY.

(A LAY OF PORTSMOUTH).

You may run down to Portsmouth,
And peer in a fort's mouth,
That is—if it's got one,
And if you can spot one—
You may visit this monarch of England's great dock yards,
And gaze at the shot and the masts in the stock yards,
Or spend a long day in the rigging and block yards;
You may view monsters lying by quay or in basin,
And think "What a change since the epoch of Jason;"
You may start at an eighty ton's deep diapason;

You may like the loud clamour
Of mallet and hammer,
And smile at our bluejackets' violent grammar;
You may be a grave wonderer
At the lines of the Thunderer,
If she's lying in port,—
If she's not, of her sort
You may find plenty others,
Her sisters—or brothers—
And ask if the man who designed 'em's a blunderer;
You may fancy a turn on
The decks of the Vernon,
And try something new naval warfare to learn on;
You may feel a grim merriment
In torpedo experiment,
Some ironclad deep in old ocean to bury meant;
You may cheer our brave soldiers departing for India,
And hope for their sakes that it won't be much windier;
You may note, if you're wary, at ev'ry ten paces,
Some marvel at this most absorbing of places,

But nought, if you're Briton, can waken your pride
Like the gallant old Victory, moored on the tide,
Or the dark little nook where Horatio died.

Up the gangway you clamber,
And enter the ship, sir;
And, entering, remember
Your hat off to slip, sir;
For that, I assure you, is quite the right tip, sir.
It's sacred, this time-honored oak that you tread,
To the memory of England's most glorious dead;
So, as if it were holy,
In reverence lowly,
For what was heroic, uncover your head.
The scene all around you, from bulwark to kelson,
Is hallowed to us by the glory of Nelson.

Yes, there is the spot
Where the envious shot
Dropped our seaman of seamen, breast-pierced, to the deck.

If unmoved you can pass
This small rivet of brass,
I'm afraid in your heart there must be a black speck.
And when later you go
To the cockpit below,
Contemplating the beam 'gainst which leaning he died,
If you feel some strange gloom,
As you'd feel by a tomb,
You needn't in shame try your visage to hide.
Are you touched ?—never fear,
'Tis permissible here
To the manliest Briton to own to a tear.

SHERRY AND SANDWICH.

(A LAY OF SANDWICH).

You'd have asked had you lived in the days of old Sandwich,
"This town—is it built on the sea or the land, which?"
For formerly ships rode at anchor quite close to it,
And landing was handy for friends or for foes to it.
But, now, where once ocean his white billows thrusted,
He's beat a retreat, evidently disgusted.
It must have been trying
To see the place dying
And even his vassal, the Stour river, drying;

So, at last, heavy-hearted,
Old ocean departed,
Saying, "Sandwich, I hoped better things when you started."
And now, for two miles from the old feudal haven,
Where flitted the sea gull, now hovers the raven,
And ocean's heard fretting
Far off, and regretting
The past with its glories nigh sunk to their setting.

The ramparts, still girdling the sombre old town,
O'er expanse of flat marshland and meadow look down.
As you pace on their summit, and hear the church chimes,
You seem to be hearing the voice of old times,
And you give yourself up to a reverie pleasant,
Till the scream of the train brings you back to the present.
Ah! grateful it is, in this steam-engine era,
In fancy sometimes to the past to get nearer,
And should you be strolling
In Sandwich, the tolling
Of curfew will make it come back to you clearer.
Dear drowsy old place,

Past is writ on thy face,
But thy quietude's rather a charm than disgrace!
A withered heart beats
In thy quaint quiet streets,
And its faint confused murmur my listing entreats.

It speaks of the days of the Dane and the Saxon,
Of Northmen fierce, piling the plunder their backs on;
Of fleets sailing forth, tempus Ted the Confessor's,
And riches increasing
In spite of the fleecing
Of William the Norman, his heirs and successors.
It summons before me a vision of Richard,
In Austrian dungeon dry-breaded and pitchered,
Here landing, and dancing with Blondel a breakdown,
For joy at release from so painful a takedown,
And then, having dined, and enjoyed a good shakedown,
Departing on foot, quite himself and quite merry,
To offer up thanks at renowned Canterbury.
It calls back the triumph of Edward the Black Prince,
From Poictiers bringing King John and the Dauphin,

The townsfolk all shouting, "We welcome you back, Prince,
In honour and glory, and not in your coffin."
Then, later, it minds me of crafty old Fleming,
So handy in 'broidery, stitching, and hemming,
Who—Spanish oppression appearing past stemming,
And troubles big looming not far in the distance—
Came hither and taught us to loom for existence.
'Tis full, this old place, of old-world recollections,
Bound up with our national lore and affections.
In fact, if agreeable to you such a venture is,
Sandwich will carry you back many centuries.
I wish to befriend you,
And so recommend you
To visit it, either from Ramsgate or Deal.
In the Market Place stand,
Look around to each hand,
And I'm positive quite mediæval you'll feel.
The hum of its houses
Quaint picturing rouses
Of stolid old Dutchmen at work in their blouses.

You can see their girls sitting
In doorways, and knitting,
And catch the shrill tones of their gossiping spouses.
Then go to the bridge,
And gaze at the ridge
That trends back from Ramsgate to ancient Ebbe's Fleet
To the left, ruined Richborough,
Weird as a witch-borough,
And barges from Faversham moored at your feet.
'Tis a picture enchanting,
When shadows are slanting;
But if it's not late,
And you're willing to wait,
Seek out one of the Inns, which are old-fashioned, very,
And ask them to give you a sandwich and sherry.
'Tis well, when your soul you're to sentiment treating,
To be, now and then, sentimental in eating.

THE DRIPPING WELL.

(A LAY OF HASTINGS).

The moon was gleaming o'er Fairlight Glen,
Some fifty winters ago,
When there stealthily gathered a posse of men
The Dripping Well rock below.

By twos and threes, behind bushes and trees,
They seemed to rise from the ground,
The frozen branches moaned to the breeze,
But never another sound.

'Twas not to gaze at the glorious night
That these muffled prowlers came.
The scene would a lover or bard delight
But theirs was a rougher game.

Hard by, to the shore, hove a rakish craft—
A smuggler, you'd say at a glance.
On the cliff above the excisemen laughed,
As they said, "Ho—ho! from France!"

Then the warning travelled from post to post,
To call the relief men in;
And they gathered, and watched each yard of the coast
Till the landing should begin.

And while they watched a message was brought
That the smugglers were out in force;
"Forty, at least," the informer thought,
"And they meant stiff work, of course."

The coastguard officer marshalled his men
With pistol, cutlass, and gun,
Then led them noiselessly down to the glen,
Concealing them one by one.

Eight oars dripped diamonds under the moon,
A galley shot shorewards fast:
The smugglers swept from the well, and soon
The ambush were crowding past.

A voice rang out in the crisp cold air
"In the King's name, fellows, stand!
I'll fire, if a mother's son should dare
So much as to move a hand."

"To Hell with the coastguard men, say I,
Come on!" yelled a smuggler bold.
Then a rush, and a shout, and the words "Let fly!"
And a crashing volley rolled.

Then groans and curses, and cutlass play,
And the cudgel's terrible thud;
And panic-struck wretches tearing away
From the scene of death and blood.

In the morn a corpse lay close to the well,
'Mid wounded and dying men,
And the dripping water like teardrops fell
From the rock in Fairlight Glen.

"ZEE LIGHTS OF DOVARE."

(A LAY OF DOVER.)

Léon Jules Anatole Achille Victor Bonjour
Was an honest bourgeois and Parisian pure;
He had studied our tongue just a little when young,
And in front of his shop "English spoken" was hung.
But it wasn't from love of our language or race;
In a true Frenchman's bosom for that there's no place.
In the heart of Bonjour hate of us pretty strong lay,
But oh! he loved dearly the coin of "ces Anglais."
The moment an Englishman entered his shop
His prices went up with a skip and a hop.

'Twas a plaisir suprême a drôle d' Anglais to "do,"
He considered he'd helped to avenge Waterloo.
Having eased English pockets of much of their gold,
A nice little fortune in time he controlled;
And he said to himself, "Je te quitte, mon Paris!
I vill go zis perfidious island to see.
Zare are two sings I varee moash like to see zare,—
Zee Palace of Christal, also zee Lord Maire."
So to see the Lord Mayor and the Sydenham Palace,
He first made his will, and then started from Calais.

The night it was wild, a sou'-wester it blew,
And from minute to minute more dirty it grew;
A fact which, alas, to Mossoò became clear
As the boat shot her nose past the head of the pier.
He would gladly have paid a month's earnings to be
At his snug little café once more à Paris!
"O mon Dieu!" he exclaimed, "Vat I give to be zare!
Vat a fool to go see zis maudite Angleterre!"—
Swish! a souser that doused him and drenched all the deck!
"Help," he cried to a sailor, "I vet me zee neck."

Then he staggered below to the stuffy saloon
And sensations peculiar mastered him soon.
First he changed in his berth, to and fro, from each side;
Then, with elbow on knee, sitting posture he tried;
Then he got on his legs and looked wildly about;
Then he said to the Steward, "Please geeve me some shtout;"
Then he lay down again in his berth like a stone;
Then, a little while later, collapsed with a groan.
A good twenty minutes by this were consumed,
The seas 'gainst the paddlebox thundered and boomed;
The whirl of the engines came sharp like a throb,
But shriller than all was poor Anatole's sob.
"O mon Dieu! O ma mère! mille tonnerres! comme je souffre!
Que ces cochons d'Anglais soient perdus dans le Gouffre!"
Then he moaned to the Steward, "Ven vill zis be ovare?
Oh! say, can you see yet zee lights, sare, of Dovare?"
"Oh! yes," said the Steward, "you'll see 'em quite plain,
If you go up on deck, sir, and don't mind the rain."
"Eef I go upon deck?—sacre bleu, quel horreur!
Zen vee getting kvite near? just von leetle quart d'heure."

"I'm afraid we shall be a bit late, sir, to-night.
Clean basin? That's it, sir, you'll soon be all right."
Then Mossoo, sinking back, turned his face to the wall,
With the gasp of an ox that expires in its stall,
While strange shiverings and quiverings coursed through his frame,
And anon from his lips sounds scarce musical came.
Another half-hour, then, "Vee must be near ovare,
Oh! Steward, vare now are zee lights, sare, of Dovare?"
"Quite close, sir, you'll see 'em quite clear from our quarter;
Hold up, sir, and try a small brandy-and-water.
You've nothing to hurt, sir, a slight touch of dizziness."
"Ugh," groaned Mossoo, "it vil keel me, zis business."
Another half-hour, during which he'd been lying,
Hands clasped on his bosom, as if he were dying.
He suddenly said, "Eef zis isn't soon ovare
I never shall look at zose lights, sare, of Dovare.
You said you could see zem one hour before, sare;
Von humbug, I tink you, vith all zat histoire, sare."
Replied the bold Steward, "I ain't of that sort, sir,
We saw 'em before we got out of the port, sir."

THE SISTERS.

(A LAY OF HERNE BAY AND RECULVER*).

Not far from Herne Bay, like a hoary stone ghost,
The ruin of Reculver looms o'er the coast.
The angry sea thunders and foams at its base,
And the bat and the sea-gull flit over its face.
Where the wave washes now, a whole township there lay
At the feet of the mound, in the old Roman day.
Take your stand on its summit, and, musing, peer down,

* Pronounced "Recklver."

And trace in your fancy this long-buried town.
Then, think of King Ethelbert holding his court
Here, in palace he built from decayed Roman fort;
And his pious Queen Bertha, her missal in hand,
Praising God for the granting of Light to the land.
Then carry your thoughts on to Bassa, the priest,
Piling up the tall minster, whose glories have ceased,
But whose weirdly-spired towers still front to the east.
Hark! the chant of the monks, and the loud Abbey bell
Sounding far over Thanet, and o'er the downs' swell!
Can't you hear it, like echo pealed out from the past?
Can't you see them all sitting at feast or at fast?
If you're fond of old legend, the spot has its share
In the little mishap to the ladies St. Clare,
The nuns who went sailing along to Broadstairs
And got caught and sandbanked in a squall unawares,
And were rescued, of course in response to their prayers.
But alas, 'twas too late, so the story is told,
For one of them died of exposure and cold,
And the other, fulfilling memorial vow,
Raised the structures that point from the towertops now.

They appear to be formed of quaint girders or twisters
And are locally known to this day as "The Sisters."

But, now, gentle reader, I fear we must leave all
These dreams of old Rome and of times mediæval;
The yarn that I spin is of quite modern day,
And the hero and heroines lodged at Herne Bay.
Now this latter's a place you'd call quiet, with reason.
I've heard it called slow, in and out of the season.
Ah me! I once stayed there. I watched by the hour
The dull little houses and sombre clock tower.
The pier and parade, and the stretch of sands tidal,
And, after a fortnight, I felt suicidal.
Few males in the place, even scarce on the jetty, coats,
Plenty of goat-chaises, donkeys, and petticoats.
And most of the latter, from lodgings emergin',
Belonged to the species—elderly virgin.
Of course when I say this, I guessed them so merely,
Their gloves were so queer and they looked so severely.
Of what one's long noticed, the memory lingers,
The gloves of old maids are all long in the fingers.

They get it perhaps from the Methodist parsons;
From people you mix with a habit soon fastens.
Among these sere spinsters one couple I noted,
From being to tract-giving fiercely devoted.
Whenever they met me they made me a present
Of one of these leaflets, and not over pleasant
I found it to read, the first thing after breakfast,
In Chancery nether Old Nick had my neck fast.
It didn't exhilarate, either, to learn
'Twas a hundred to one I should frizzle or burn.
It seemed to me rather monotonous growing to
Find myself always asked "Where are you going to?"
Nor did it belief in myself much confirm
To be told I was only a brand or a worm.
This is what these good ladies in fact though informed me,
As daily with these little papers they stormed me,
And looked just as if they'd have liked to have warmed me.
Of course, gentle reader, in part I am joking,
I wouldn't tart fun at good people be poking.
Of Christian intentions I cherish a due sense,
But, then, I was worldly and thought them a nuisance.

Well near me, one day was a gentleman sitting—
Not young, pretty stout, clad in garments well fitting.
His eyes they were roguish, his cheeks they were rosy,
He looked like a bachelor, easy and cosy.
I cannot say why a man doesn't look married;
I know that my instinct has seldom miscarried.
He offered a weed, and he talked of the weather,
And long we sat smoking and chatting together.
Somehow, from my pocket, as vainly I fumbled
To pull out a matchbox, a leaflet out tumbled.
He smiled with a smile that was slightly sardonic,
And said, "I perceive you are taking the tonic.
It's sharpish sometimes, and it very nigh blisters.
I'm speaking, of course, of the tracts of 'The Sisters.'"
"The Sisters?" I cried. "Yes," said he, "the two ruins—
You've heard of 'The Sisters', and priest Bassa's doin's.
Well, don't these two ladies recall you the story?
The two ruined towers, all wrinkled and hoary;
Their features are like, to my mind, the old Minster's,
It gives you a sermon, and so do these spinsters."

A week or two after, intense my surprise—
In fact, I could scarcely believe my own eyes—
When I met Mister Artiful—that was his name—
Cavaliering the ladies. O dear what a game!
I bowed as they passed, and I thought "Is he cracked?"
As he gravely approached me and gave me a tract,
Which was headed, I saw more in sorrow than wrath,
"O Sinner, who knows what a day may bring forth?"
Then he said, with a wink, "I'll be back in a minute.
I've found a gold mine, and I mean to get in it."

The ladies, in truth, were two wealthy old things;
Men will court a she-fiend, if of gold are her wings;
And he said to me, joining me later, to smoke,
"I've proposed to the elder, indeed it's no joke,
By Jingo, I'd marry them both, if I could."
"Ah," said I, "they're two women of *princ*ipal good."
Then he asked me to join them sight-seeing next day.
"They're determined to see the two towers, they say,
But, I beg you, don't mention the name of the spires;
Just call 'em 'the Cousins' if either enquires.

They've asked me the name twice or thrice in the week,
And to call 'em 'the Sisters' I hadn't the cheek.
In fact, they're so touchy, like every old maid,
That to breathe such a word would spoil all, I'm afraid."

We started next day and examined the site,
And the ladies expressed their unbounded delight,
Till the coastguard who guided us suddenly said,
"Them spires is in memory of parties who's dead.
They calls 'em the Sisters."
"The cousins, my man,"
We cried. "You're mistaken, and prove it we can."
"The Sisters, I tell you," the fellow replied;
To which we rejoined, "Your informant has lied;"
But he stuck to his text with a stubbornness baneful,
And oh, the effect on the ladies was painful!
Their faces flushed up, then they grew very white,
And their lips were drawn over their teeth very tight,
And they said to poor Artiful, half with a groan:—
"We don't feel quite well. We'll return, sir, alone.
We know the man's right, sir. You don't tell the truth.
You've no right to insult us because we've not youth,

The ruins are sisters, not cousins, and we
Are sisters *and* ruins. We grasp it, you see."
Then they turned on their heels and got into their carriage:
And Artiful said, "It's U.P. with the marriage!
They saw through our little joke neat as could be,
And what's more to the point, they saw clearly through
me."

* * * * *

If you visit old Reculver, reader, beware
Of escorting two sisters past middle age there.

THE LOVERS' SEAT.

(A LAY OF HASTINGS).

All ye who delight in a nice love tale,
On hillside told, by a dark female;
All ye who would gaze, from our green cliff-tops,
Over sunlit sea, over glen and copse:
All ye who've never careered along,
For one-and-six, on a char-à-banc,
All red and yellow, with four big greys,
O rouse ye betimes, one of these fine days,

And by Hastings' beach, near the Queen's Hotel,
You'll find such a trap, there touting;
So climb to your place and drop the swell,
And enjoy a real good outing!
In front of you sit two jolly old girls,
With good round backs, and corkscrew curls,
And a basket holding pies of pork,
And a thing possessing a neck and cork.
Beside you, a damsel pink and fat,
In a bright blue jacket and sailor hat,
With red silk gloves and a pea-green fan,
And her waist embraced by a pale young man.
Behind you, a party tall and thin,
With a white dog collar beneath his chin,
Blue specs, black gloves, and a clerical hat,
And a book and a map, all opened flat;
And a lady, next to him, pinched and meek,
Who sighs, and rarely appears to speak.
There's a tall braw Scot, with sandy hair,
Who begins with a wrangle about the fare;
Two spotty-faced youths, in flannel suits,

Who drop their H's, and smoke cheroots;
There's a German sour, and a fat Mossoo
Who says to every one, "How you do?"
There's a Yankee, who's come some thousand miles,
But don't think much of the British Isles;
There's a smart little widow, with two small sons,
Who fidget and fight, and eat Bath buns;
A red-nosed countryman, bluff and hearty,
And several others. A real nice party.

Crack goes the whip, the road is clear,
The rugs are off, and the leaders rear;
Then, settling down to a good swing trot,
Away they rattle, a right good lot.
One wheeler, perhaps, is a wee bit stiff,
But he's right ere he passes the Castle cliff;
Of devotional knees the other's a pair,
But he's in no humour for morning prayer;
He shakes his head at the noisy thong,
And tugs at the collar, and bowls along.

Past bathing machines, hotels, and shops
Where tradesmen are reaping golden crops!
Past stately crescent and bright parade
Where you sigh in vain for a little shade!
Past Castle Hill and the fishermen's quarter,
Then sharp to the left, and away from the water!
Uphill, uphill, uphill we rise,
Till the jog-trot into an amble dies;
Uphill, uphill, up the slopes of chalk,
Till the amble dies down into a walk;
Uphill, uphill, still winding steep,
Till the walk dies almost into a creep;
Then a levellish bit—adieu to the town;
And we land at the top of Fairlight Down!

Then ladders to work, and down we slide,
And we help the ladies down the side;
And the two old girls declare they'll stay,
If we don't all look the other way.
Then downward over the Down, and then
By a deep cart-road to Fairlight Glen.

There the two old girls put down their basket,
And *look* for help, if they don't quite ask it,
And you and I take it up between us,
And think if our Mas could but have seen us!
The pink young thing, and her swain as well,
Have disappeared in the leafy dell;
Mossoo, with the widow, exclaims, "Mon Dieu!"
And *they* shortly after retire from view,
While her little boys climb down streamlet beds,
And we leave them punching each other's heads.
The spotty-faced youths sink down on a bench,
And smoke and flirt with a gipsy wench.
The clerical party observes to his wife,
"It's the heavenliest spot he has seen in life!"
And the Yankee reckons there's lots more pretty,
Right in the middle of New York city!
Then on we go to the headland's top,
Where the precipice makes the old girls stop,
Declaring already they've dizzy grown,
And they'll never get down that path, *alone*.
Then we say that the peril must be faced,

And we take them each, at last, by the waist,
And we swear that the light gazelles they'd beat,
And—there we are at the Lovers' Seat!

O noble expanse of sky and sea!
O beetling crag! O nestling tree!
O towering cliff, like western Tor!
No wonder we all exclaim, "O Lor!"
That is, all those who do not cry,
As the spotty-faced youths did, "O my eye!"

Then forth there steps, from behind a rock,
A dark little maid, in a cloak and frock
Of gipsy pattern, and hat with rose,
Who says to you, somewhat through her nose:—
"Would you like me to tell
What here befell
Two lovers, whom fate did not treat well?"
And we say, "Why certainly, tell it, miss."
And the story of love she tells is this:—

"A naval gent, whose name I am
Not certain about as which,
But I've heerd some say as they called him Lamb,
Though he didn't behave as sich,

Fell in love with a reel young lady here,
Which she fell in love with he;
And they used to meet, in the moonlight clear,
Where now stands you and me.

The lover was poor, the lady rich,
And her parients wasn't kind;
But she said that *she* didn't care one stitch,
If the hofficer didn't mind.

So she waved her hankercher every night,
As a sign to him below;
And he'd climb, in his huniform, up the height,
Where honly a goat could go.

Then they ran away and were wed, and she
Had a bonnie baby born;
And then he was drownded out at sea,
And she was left forlorn.

And she came to her parients in her grief,
With her baby in her shawl;
But they turned her out, like a lowborn thief,
Which she wasn't, yer know, at all.

And she came and stood on the rock above
That stands out sharp and stiff,
And she said, 'Look 'ere, I dies for love!'
And she chucked herself from the cliff.

But she wasn't killed, as yer might suppose,
For, half-way down, a tree
There stood, as catched tight hold of her 'close,'
Just summut above her knee.

And there she was hooked, and there she hung,
A-screeching out of her throat,
Till another Revenue Capting sprung
Ashore from a cutter's boat.

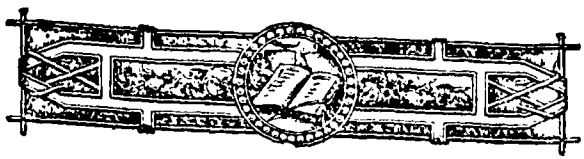
He'd seen her jump, and he'd seen her caught,
And he'd heerd her screech and shriek,
And he took her down, as a gentleman hought,
And married her in a week.

She had several hother babies small,
And was werry contented too.
So, ladies and gentlemen, there, that's all,
And I wishes luck to you."

Then we give her a threepenny piece all round,
And we gaze about at the hallowed ground,
And the two old girls declare they see
Just underneath us, the very tree;

"Look! there it is, sir, close to the crag!
And oh! on the branch there's a shred of rag!"
Then the clerical says he has often heard of it,
And the Scot, that he doesn't believe a word of it:—
"Some folk there may be who think it funny,
But it's only a dodge for extorting money."
Then back we climb, to the top of the rise,
And we and the old girls eat the pies,
And we draw the cork, and we drink the whisky,
And the two old girls become quite frisky.
Then back again to the char-à-banc;
Once more the cheery crack of the thong,
As down the hills we merrily clatter,
With joke and laugh and friendly chatter,
All through the streets, to the lower town,
To the starting point, where we all get down.

'Twas a glorious ride, and cheaply done,
And, reader, I wish you as much good fun.



THE BEST PEOPLE.

(A LAY OF DASHBOURNE, WHEREVER THAT IS).

Writes Aunt, "So you're coming to Dashbourne, dear,
Of course you must know the best people here.
Good introductions you'd best procure."
Say I to myself—"Well, I'm not so sure.

"For social importance I've no great thirst.
Sometimes the 'best people' I've found the worst.
The very best people, who are they, pray?
The titled? the wealthy? the slow? the gay?

"The Aristocrat with his haughty frown?
The Millionaire from a grimy town?
The half-pay Officer, poor and proud?
The city Merchant who talks so loud?

"The neighbouring Squire who weighs your worth
By exactly as much as you own of earth?
The Parson, who prates of our trials here,
And adds to the parish a child a year?

"The Member who, canvassing, bares his head,
But, when elected, just cuts you dead?
The beaten Candidate, cool before,
Leaving his visiting card at your door?

"The prosy Admiral, boring the club?
The bilious General, sharp at snub?
The Baronet's widow, with stuck-up airs?
The Councillor's wife at feud with the Mayor's?

"Are these the best people? perhaps they are.
Perhaps too cynical I, by far.
I'm partly serious, only partly,
And flavour my dish perhaps too tartly.

"The best of people are those, I find,
Who are kind of heart and cultured of mind.
Potent, no doubt, are the claims of birth;
But far above all are the claims of worth;

"Of generous nature, delicate taste;
Of warmth and dignity interlaced;
Of fear to hurt, and of care to please.
The best are they who've such claims as these."

THE PASSING SHIPS.

(A LAY OF DEAL, FOR CHOICE).

The passing ships! the passing ships! by breeze impelled or steam,
How phantom-like they glide along, like figures in a dream!
From left to right, from right to left, you watch them from the beach,
They move across your vision's range, and set you musing, each.

You wonder whither sails yon barque, that's beating outward bound;
You wonder whence yon steamer hails, that heads the Foreland round;

What distant clime one seeks, one leaves; what life on each, or death;
And, while you muse and ask yourself, they vanish like a breath.

Like human breath, like human life, with freight of good or ill;
Some piloted with careless hand, and some with master skill;
Some drifting as if helpless: some as if the crew were blind;
Some raising scarce a ripple, others leaving trail behind.

The man of purpose leaves a trail, the man inert leaves none.
He sinks into the tomb unmissed when his dull day is done.
How like our life the mariner's! We're ships upon the wave;
Our Will the pilot, Right the compass, and our port the Grave.

BATTLE ABBEY.

(A LAY OF HASTINGS).

At feet of stateliest cedar trees,
That sigh a soft dirge in the evening breeze,
Where the crumbling stone,
With mosses o'ergrown,
Marks the site of the Minster's altar-throne,
Go take thy stand,
And think of the day,
When thy native land
Fell the Norman's prey ;
When Saxon sinew went down before

The mail of the alien, in streams of gore,
And Harold, the noblest of the race,
With his brothers twain,
Fierce fighting in vain,
Was smitten to earth, with shaft-hit face,
And died, where he stood, at his Standard's base.

Be thou Saxon or Norman of blood, drop here,
In spirit at least, a pitying tear,
And say to thyself, with bated breath :—
" 'Twas a noble stand, and a noble death.
Like a King, indeed, he fought and fell.
O country, he loved thee passing well!"

Take look around
From the rising ground
Where the Saxon footmen stood.
There's Telham Hill
To the left front still,
To the right, Camp Hill and Wood.

In the ridge's face,
An open space
Where the Norman columns swarmed;
As, backs to the sea,
In masses three,
At the foot of the slope they formed.
O think what a sight
That morning bright
Disclosed to the Saxon gaze!
The steel-clad force
Of foot and horse,
In the autumn sun, ablaze!
Dense forests of lance
From Normandy, France,
Bretagne, and Aquitaine;
Varlet and Lord,
Akin by the sword
And the thirst for blood and gain;
Taking their place
With disciplined pace
And a silence grim and cold,

Till the word was giv'n,
And the air was riv'n
With the trumpet blare outrolled!
Full many a Saxon heart must have quailed,
For the fate of his love and land,
At the sight of that army, massed and mailed,
And his own ill-ordered band.
Of little avail strong thews, hearts brave,
Or disdain of the foeman's race,
Of little avail, except to save
Discomfiture from disgrace!

O Englishmen, think of that gruesome fray,
Where art and armament won the day,
And English valour proved sorry stay.
Your hearts may be sound, your hands may be strong,
Your blood may boil at your country's wrong,
You may rush to arms at your country's call,—
But, unprepared, you will go to the wall.

Old Abbey!—record of William's power,
And gallant Harold's expiring hour,
Of training's triumph, of forethought wise,
Of English fall, and Norman rise,—
When tourists go viewin'
Thy noble ruin,
Thy crypts and halls,
Thy hoary walls,
And they stand beside
The garrulous guide,
As he shews them the spot where the hero died,—
May'st thou speak to their hearts, from thy eloquent stones,
This solemn maxim in warning tones:—
That State will stand, as a mountain, steady,
And that alone, that is armed and ready.

THE SEASIDE OF ENGLAND.

(CONCLUDING LAY).

The Seaside of England! how dear to us all!
Be we rich, be we poor, be we full-grown, or small!
Be we well, be we ill, be we married, or single—
We all love a glimpse of the insular shingle.

The moment deal spade we can grasp in our hand,
Aren't we fiercely impelled to the seaweed and sand?
Our passion for salt, as for malt, is quite striking,
It comes to us probably straight from the Viking.

What joy for the child can compare with the treat
Of erecting sand fortress and getting wet feet?

Of 'Arry what else can approach the delight, on
A yawl closely crowded at Margate or Brighton ?

To the youth of sixteen where's such bliss to be had
As his big cousin Jack's on a huge ironclad ?
E'en the heir to ten thousand a year's to be pitied
Who hasn't for summer his yacht ready fitted.

To this instinct marine, in our talk, we pay toll—
Don't we call a kind uncle a jolly old sole ?
And when a man acts cuter far than we wish, he
Is characterized as—decidedly fishy ?

Our tastes for the salt even inland far reach,
Don't we cultivate fondly the tree called a beach ?
And Mamma, without doubt, the same spirit confesses,
When she orders the girls sailor hats, and surge dresses.

If you see a wee fellow all shrivelled and limp,
Don't you instantly call him a poor little shrimp ?
And when a bold yarner is yarning unduly,
You say that he's gulling you, don't you now, truly ?

When a nice little girl in your heart sticks a shaft,
You admit to yourself she's a neat little craft.
Comes your wife in a blaze that you didn't expect, sir,
Don't you say, in a rage, "She's outrageously decked, sir?"

Policeman X 2 courts your kitchenmaid Jane,
He's anchoring after her—tells you so plain.
When an Englishman land in the Far West goes grabbin',
The first thing he does is to run up a cabin.

When a *roué* you meet with weak limbs and bent neck,
And premature wrinkles, you cry "What a wreck!"
When your friend is a company novel promoting,
You ask when you meet him, "Well, Jack, is it floating?'

When you've made a mistake, and you're forced to hark back,
You own to yourself "you've been on the wrong tack;"
And when you get plighted to maiden enticing,
The measure you contemplate next is the splicing.

When matters look black and through troubles you grope,
You scuttle sometimes, unless buoyed up by hope;
And on every heart this device is engraven,
Man's life is a voyage, and death is the haven.

That our nature's salt-waterish our habits reveal,
And our national signet would best be a seal.
'Twere vain too the cause of our horseyness hiding;
It's the up and down motion that makes us love riding.

On oak or on pigskin we'll equally ride,
And we'll challenge the world across country or tide—
But howe'er we may fare upon land, I've a notion
Old England will always be Queen of the ocean.

And so, to the end, like the Vikings of yore,
We'll find our best music in ocean's deep roar;
And over our pudding and roast beef and gravy,
We'll drink to the health of our Queen and our Navy!

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